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SPECIAL ISSUE ON
VAMPIRES



LEE! BARNABAS! BLACULA!
COUNT YORGA! LUGOSI!

SPECIAL BONUS
PHOTO-FEATURE:

INSIDE HAMMER FILMS

Baran '74

MONSTERS

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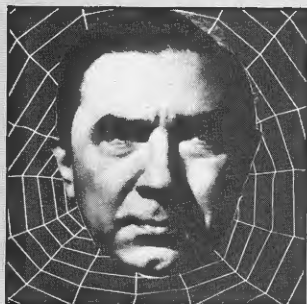
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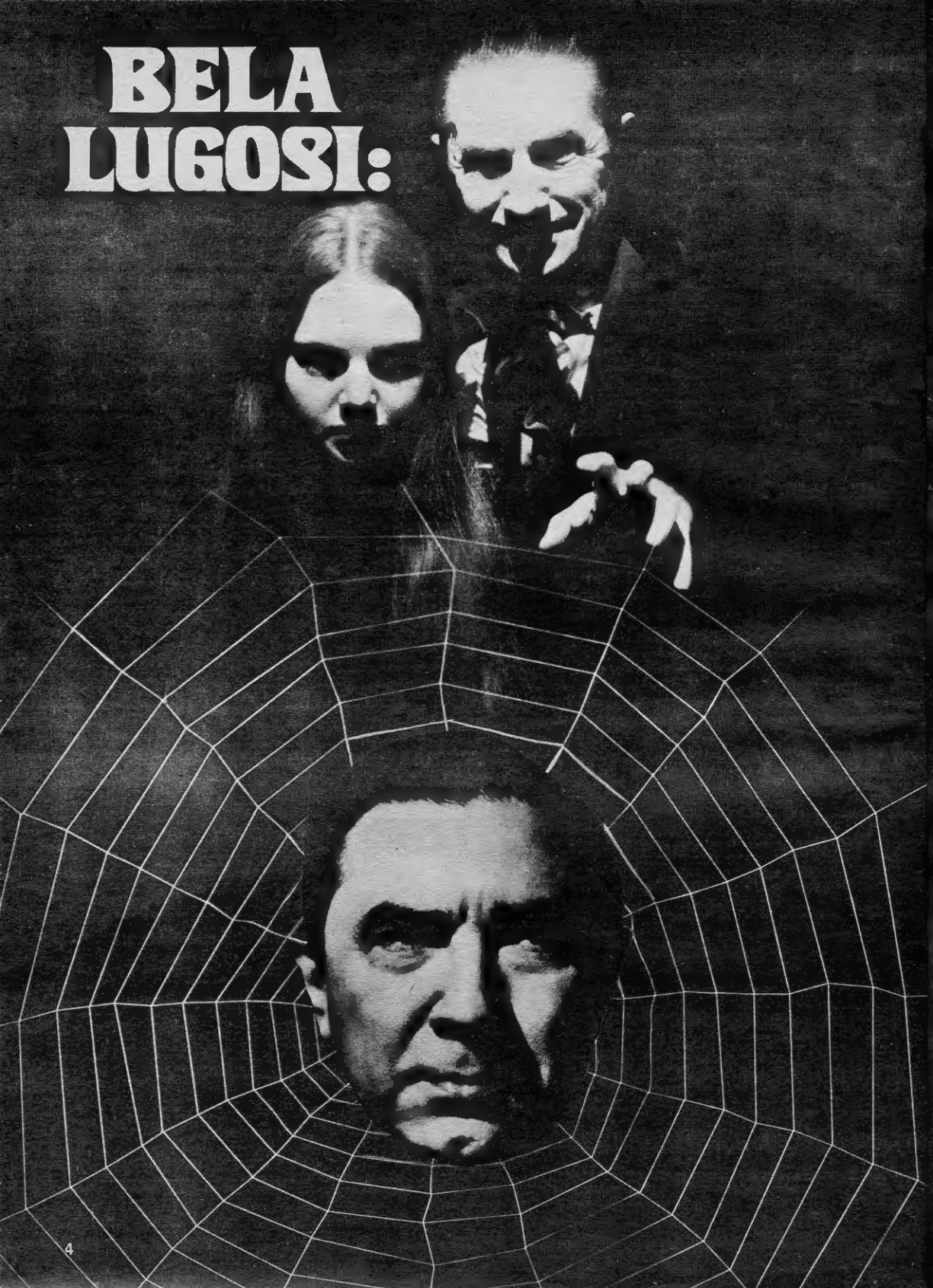
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 DID kill Dracula?



BELA LUGOSI:



His Life And Undeath

The shadow of the first Dracula—Bela Lugosi—falls across all who have portrayed the Ruler of the Undead ever since, right up through Christopher Lee. Some accuse Lugosi of over-acting, or stage-acting, but the IMAGE he projected as the Vampire is as timelessly classic and haunting as Karloff's Frankenstein Monster, or John Wayne's Western Hero, or Chaplin's Little Fellow.

by Ron Haydock

A Second Life for Dracula?

Dracula died in 1956.

That's not quite true, of course; Dracula didn't die. Bela Lugosi did. But to many people, it didn't really matter. Lugosi and Dracula were one and the same. The Hungarian-born actor had taken Bram Stoker's fictional creation and, without really meaning to, had made it his own, never really escaping from the blessings—and the curses—that his portrayal bequeathed him in the decades that followed the film, *DRACULA*'s release in 1931.

Ironically, Lugosi was planning to repeat his classic role when he died, under the aegis of producer Alex Gordon. This new version of *DRACULA* was to show Lugosi not only in wide-screen and color, but in the latest marvel of the 'fifties, *three dimensions*!

I spoke with Gordon some years later and he told me that even though Lugosi had, for the most part, never been personally happy about his continuing world-wide success as Bram Stoker's classic vampire—or even necessarily *pleased* with his fame as purely a star of horror films, nothing else—he was, in 1956, actually looking forward with enthusiasm to filming the new *DRACULA* movie, and was hoping that this picture would prove successful enough to warrant more new films about the character. Unfortunately, though, for all his fans and admirers, death claimed the famous horror star before his newest project could even get out of the planning stages.

Death could kill the man, but it couldn't kill the legend.

Because that's what Lugosi was, a legend in his own lifetime, and his influence on horror films—particularly the role of the vampire in films—continues today, each passing year helping make the legend immortal. Which leads us to a second, greater, irony; because, when he died, Lugosi had only just begun to accept his world-wide fame as *the* pre-eminent cinema vampire. He personally felt that his acting career had been severely hampered by his success as the character, Dracula; that he had, in fact, become much too associated—indeed, even stereotyped—with vampire and horror films in general to ever again be given the opportunity to displaying his fine acting talents in other, non-horror roles.

Nevertheless, Lugosi's performances as Count Dracula have become as classic as the character itself, Lugosi's inflections, gestures, and mannerisms actually becoming basic guidelines for almost every other actor who's

attempted the role since. Say what you will about the film and the acting, Lugosi's performance of Dracula cast the dramatic mold which the world at large has, over the years, come to accept as the definitive portrayal of the most legendary Monster of Monsters—the *Undying Vampire*!

Lugosi's first screen appearances were in the Eichberg Film Company's, *NECKLACE OF THE DEAD* (1919) and *DER JANUSKOPF* (DR. JEKYL AND MISTER HYDE), in which he had small roles. *THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS* (1920), though, saw him with a somewhat larger one—that of an Indian chief. Since 1915, however, Lugosi had been acting on the stage, touring Europe and receiving acclaim in roles that often saw him as a rather dashing romantic lead—hardly any kind of menace at all. Lugosi was to continue in the theatre throughout the rest of his life; it was one of his loves. Even a few years before his death in 1956 he was still performing on the 'boards,' playing the title role in an English production of *DRACULA*. And, in a way, it's fitting that the *first* time Lugosi played the role that was to make him famous was on the stage, in New York City in 1927—not in films at all.

Lugosi's stage performance of *DRACULA*—which had previously been performed on the London stage by *Hamilton Deane* and *Raymond Huntley*—was a success from opening night. The play was advertised as the ultimate in terror and the producers even went so far as to hire a hospital nurse to stand by each performance of the thriller, just in case the suspense and/or terror proved to be too much for any members of the audience.

Lugosi's tall, suavely menacing vampire was a big hit with the theater-going public and the play was successful enough to run for over two years before its final performance. *DRACULA* was Lugosi's first big success in America, though he'd been working in Hollywood for years in such silent films as: *THE SILENT COMMAND* (1923), *THE REJECTED WOMAN* (1924) and *THE MIDNIGHT GIRL* (1925), none of his film roles giving him any kind of critical or public recognition.

Bram Stoker's *DRACULA* changed all that. The play was his first big step towards stardom, and the role—as things turned out—was one that was destined to make Bela Lugosi immortal.

Back Home in Transylvania

Like Dracula himself, Bela Lugosi was born in the



At last, Bela has Nina Foch all to himself in *Return of the Vampire*. His technique had not changed a great deal since *Dracula* some dozen years earlier.



Bela Lugosi had the trick of throttling Dwight Frye down pretty pat as he demonstrates in the film, *Dracula*, Universal, 1931.

heart of the legendary home country of the vampire, Hungary. Originally, his surname was Blasko, but when he decided on a theatrical career in 1915 he changed it to Lugosi, which he took from Lugos, the town in Hungary where he was born.

Bram Stoker's *DRACULA* in New York City was his first big step towards stardom, and as a role, as it turned out, that was also destined to bring him immortality.

Because of *DRACULA*'s success on stage, Carl Laemmle, president of Universal Pictures, obtained the screen rights to the play. Laemmle did not, however, obtain Lugosi, who by 1929 had returned to Hollywood to work in films like *THE 13TH CHAIR*, *THE VEILED WOMAN* and *PRISONERS*. Instead of Lugosi, Laemmle wanted Universal's big name character star, Lon Chaney, to portray Dracula. Laemmle was also interested in having Chaney star in a movie version of *FRANKENSTEIN* should the *DRACULA* film turn over a sizable boxoffice. In 1930, however, while Lugosi was appearing in *SUCH MEN ARE DANGEROUS*, *RENEGADES* and *WILD COMPANY*, Lon Chaney died, and Laemmle was forced then to scout around for another actor to play the vampire. So, he offered the role to Lugosi—who had, after all, been such a success with it in New York.

Lugosi accepted the offer, and what followed is cinema history.

Dracula Makes Good

Universal's *DRACULA* starred Bela Lugosi, with Edward Van Sloan as Dracula's nemesis, Professor Van Helsing, Dwight Frye as the vampire's mad slave Renfield and Helen Chandler as Mina Harker, the girl most sought after by Dracula. It was released in 1931 and was, like Stoker's original novel in 1897, an immediate, overwhelming success everywhere in the world. The film may have lacked sufficient movement, being too influenced by the staging of the play, but that mattered little to screaming movie audiences of the time. Lugosi's masterful vampire frightened men and women alike and the scenes in Dracula's Transylvanian castle, were—and still are—some of the eeriest moments ever put on film.

Overnight, it seemed, Bela Lugosi had replaced Lon Chaney as the movies' number one master of menace and—eager now to capitalize on the big hit horror film of *DRACULA*—Carl Laemmle immediately decided to go into production with two more horror tales from classic pens: Mary Shelley's *FRANKENSTEIN* and Edgar Allan Poe's *MURDERS IN THE RUE MORGUE*, both to star Lugosi. But after sending film audiences the world over into shock with *DRACULA*, Laemmle and Universal were now in for a shock of their own: Lugosi turned down *FRANKENSTEIN*.

Under the impression he was going to play *Doctor Frankenstein* in the movie, Lugosi learned to his dismay that Laemmle wanted him to actually play Frankenstein's *Monster*, which was a non-speaking role. And because Lugosi was extremely proud of his speaking voice—which he had trained long and hard on the stage—he refused to take the role of the monster, even though Universal by that time had begun sending out full page color advertisements of the new Lugosi *FRANKENSTEIN* to their theatre exchanges all over the country. Lugosi did, however, agree to do some makeup tests as the Monster. And, twelve years later,



"Yes, this is definitely Bela Lugosi," Lionel Barrymore seems to be saying about the bat on the other side of his magnifying glass in *Mark of the Vampire*. (Barrymore played Professor Zelen, a scientist-detective.)

in 1943, Lugosi *did* play the monster, in **FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN**, by which time he had been hopelessly cast as a horror star and was accepting nearly any kind of acting work he could get.

In 1932, Lugosi began filming **MURDERS IN THE RUDE MORGUE**, in which he played Dr. Mirakle, a carnival sideshow performer who had trained a large ape named Sultan to kidnap beautiful young women for strange experiments in Mirakle's secret underground laboratory. At the same time, Universal filmed **FRANKENSTEIN** with *Boris Karloff* starring as the monster, and it's been said many times since then that Lugosi's mistake here was Karloff's break. **FRANKENSTEIN** far-and-away outshone **MURDERS IN THE RUDE MORGUE** at the world boxoffice and even by the time the initial audience shouting was over, Karloff's name was seen to be glittering much more brightly in the Hollywood heavens than Lugosi's. It was to remain this way throughout the rest of their careers.

A third irony: If Bela Lugosi had filmed **FRANKENSTEIN**, Boris Karloff—a comparative unknown at the time—might never have been discovered for the major star he was.

Never Trust a Vampire

THE MARK OF THE VAMPIRE (1935) served to further associate Bela Lugosi's name with vampire and horror films, even though this MGM remake of Lon Chaney's silent **LONDON AFTER MIDNIGHT** (1929) was neither a true vampire nor a true horror film. **THE MARK OF THE VAMPIRE** had Lugosi haunting a house as a character who seemed to be a vampire. The last reel explained that Lugosi and his monstrous associates in the film—*Carol Borland* for one—were only stage magicians and show people hired by *Lionel Barrymore* to frighten the wits out of a house party of guests. The film was actually more of a mystery play than anything else. Still, the title of the movie—as well as many scenes of Lugosi acting Dracula-

like in cape and moonlight—was effective vampire footage and drove the stake of vampire-horror association even more firmly into his career.

Lugosi returned to playing a true vampire in Columbia's **THE RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE** (1943). Here, Lugosi was a vampire who had been staked to death some twenty years earlier and whose remains were then discovered by two gravediggers beneath the rubble of a bombed-out cemetery in modern war-torn London. Thus freed of his imprisonment of the stake, Lugosi as Armand Tesla returned to Undead life to carry on neferiously with a werewolf slave companion, played by *Matt Willis*.

While the movie was not quite another **DRACULA**, **THE RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE** remains an interesting addition to vampire movie lore and represents the nearest vampire role to Dracula Lugosi ever played in films.

Between **DRACULA** and **THE RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE**, Lugosi starred in PRC's **THE DEVIL BAT** (1940) playing a mad scientist named Dr. Carruthers who raised large furry vampire bats. Lugosi had trained his huge pet bats to react violently to the scent of a mens' after-shave cologne he had invented, a sample of which he sent to each of his victims, businessmen whom he believed had ruthlessly cheated him out of the profits from a perfume he had developed years before. Loosing his giant devil bats after midnight, Lugosi gleefully watched them swoop through the night to seek their victims by the hated scent of the cologne. In the climax, Lugosi himself was caught with some of his own cologne on his face and neck and the next thing he knew, there was a giant fire-eyed vampire bat swooping down on him.

Lugosi was also busy starring in other kinds of horror films during these years, generally playing mad scientists, suspicious butlers or just plain creepy characters who always seemed to remind audiences of Dracula moving around without fangs or black cloak. Except for Para-

mount's *ISLAND OF LOST SOULS* (1932), in which he was a wolf man; United Artists' *WHITE ZOMBIE* (1932), where he led a zombie cult; and his continuing work at Universal—primarily in a series of films with Boris Karloff—Lugosi's other films were mostly very low budget affairs for studios like Monogram, Mascot, Principal and World-Wide, among others, and are generally remembered today only because Lugosi was in them. *THE WHISPERING SHADOW* (1933), *CHANDU ON THE MAGIC ISLE* (1935), *SOS COAST GUARD* (1936); three "continued next week" serials: *DARK EYES OF LONDON* (1939), *BOWERY AT MIDNIGHT* (1942) and *THE APE MAN* (1943) were some of the better known films of the group.

Universal's *THE BLACK CAT* (1934) was the first of six films that teamed Lugosi with Karloff. Supposedly based on Edgar Allan Poe's classic story, *THE BLACK CAT* actually turned out to be a strange and rather chilling tale about devil worship, with Karloff having the meatier role of the satanic cult leader, compared to Lugosi's physician. A guest star appearance in *GIFT OF GAB* (1934) followed. Then came *THE RAVEN* (1935).

While again not a faithful Poe adaptation, *THE RAVEN* was nevertheless powerfully influenced by the Poe mystique and starred Lugosi as a maniacal collector of Poe. Besides owning many valuable editions of Poe's work, this mad Lugosi also had his own stuffed



Helen Chandler stares in a moon-eyed trance as Bela Lugosi—*Dracula*—throttles the sniveling Renfield (Dwight Frye) in the stage version of the famed tale.



raven sitting perched on his deck and his very own menacing, swinging pendulum down in the pit of his Poe-inspired dungeon of horrors. Karloff, a criminal, was forced to obey Lugosi's treacherous commands here after Lugosi operated on him to give him a new face (Lugosi gave him a horribly disfigured face, and made Karloff his slave).

THE INVISIBLE RAY (1936), *THE SON OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1939) and *BLACK FRIDAY* (1940) followed *THE RAVEN* into theatres and were all solid films. With RKO's *THE BODY SNATCHER* (1944), however, Lugosi and Karloff starred for producer Val Lewton in what was perhaps their finest film together: an excellent adaptation of Robert Louis Stevenson's classic short story about grave robbing in eighteenth-century England.

They both turned in memorable performances in his horror film that was diabolically atmospheric with gaslight mystery and menacing horror.

Dracula Becomes Frankenstein

In 1943 Bela Lugosi played the role he had originally turned down in 1931: the Monster of Frankenstein. In Universal's *FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN*, Lugosi as the monster warred mightily against Lon Chaney, Jr. as Lawrence Talbot, the Wolf Man, in a horror thriller that was high on action—if not classic horror mood and suspense. The role, however, did little, if anything, to boost Lugosi's career.

The Universal series of Frankenstein films had been consistently dropping in quality after the initial entries, *FRANKENSTEIN* (1931) and *THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1935), and Karloff himself had vacated the role of the monster after the third title, *THE SON OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1935), as he became aware of the downhill progression; in particular, of the scripting of the Monster's characterization. Whereas Karloff's Monster had been written as a rather pathetic creature; by the time Lugosi finally stepped into the role, the Monster was not much more than a savage



Bela Lugosi and his werewolf buddy seem both to be making like wolves over Nina Foch in *Return of the Vampire*.



Bela Lugosi's daily sleep is broken by the opening of his coffin by his werewolf flunkie in *Return of the Vampire*, 1943.

brute, a monster star of vehicle films that were capitalizing on the famous name of Frankenstein without much attempt at capturing the original character of Mary Shelley's creation.

Previous to **FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN**, Lugosi had made two other Frankenstein movies, **THE SON OF FRANKENSTEIN** (1939) and **THE GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN** (1942) in which he played Ygor, the mad, broken-necked shepherd who befriended the Monster (Karloff in **SON**, Chaney in **GHOST**) and wanted the creature restored to its full terrifying strength so he could then use the Monster to revenge himself on his enemies.

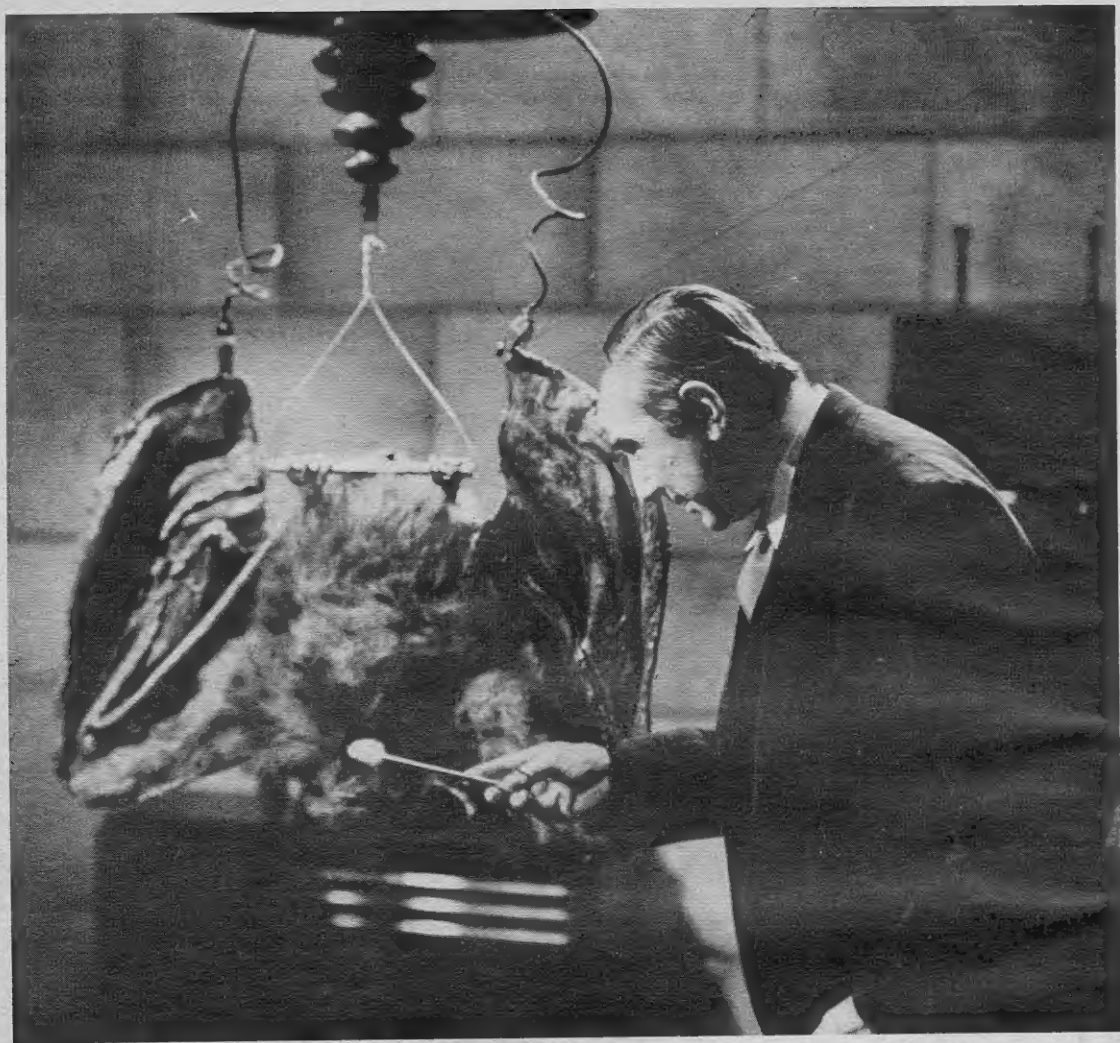
Perhaps even more than Dracula, Lugosi's Ygor in these films was his best role in horror films as he showed what a fine character performance he could turn in when given the opportunity. Alex Gordon, film producer and personal friend of Lugosi, and *Bill Obbagy*, Lugosi's biographer, have both agreed that Lugosi's Ygor offered some of the actor's finest moments on screen.

Lugosi returned to play Dracula in movies a second and final time in **ABBOTT AND COSTELLA MEET FRANKENSTEIN** (1948), a monster comedy co-starring *Glenn Strange* as the monster, Lon Chaney as *The Wolf Man* and a cameo "appearance" by *Vincent Price* as *The Invisible Man*. While the film was played strictly for laughs, Lugosi still managed to portray Dracula with sinister effect. Lugosi also appeared as

Dracula while on a promotional tour of the country with *Strange and Chaney*. Then, in 1950, Lugosi played Dracula one more time with *Abbott and Costello*, this time on television on **THE COLGATE COMEDY HOUR** in a sketch that was designed to recall the monstrous romping seen in the Universal horror comedy two years before—a horror comedy that was such a boxoffice bonanza for the studio that it actually rescued them from a disastrous financial situation.

In 1950, Lugosi travelled to England where he starred in a stage revival of **DRACULA**. During the forties in America he had also played the vampire on stage, as well as continuing his movie work with **THE WOLF MAN** (1941), **NIGHT MONSTER** (1942), **THE VODOO MAN** (1944), **RETURN OF THE APE MAN** (1944), **ZOMBIES ON BROADWAY** (1945) and, among many more, **SCARED TO DEATH** (1947), a Golden Gate Pictures release in color in which he skulked around a house of death in a black slouch hat and black cape, not unlike Dracula.

While in England, Lugosi starred in a horror comedy in which—once again—he was a vampire: **OLD MOTHER RILEY MEETS THE VAMPIRE** (1952), produced by *Richard Gordon*, brother of Alex, and eventually released to American television under the more sinister title of **MY SON, THE VAMPIRE**. In this film Lugosi matched wits with a cantankerous *Old Mother Riley* who, like *Abbott and Costello*, was the star of an entire series of comedy films. The picture, 9



Dr. Carruthers (Lugosi) and his pet vampire, *The Devil Bat* himself, in the PRC thriller of that title.

however, was never released theatrically in America because American distributors feared American audiences would never understand Old Mother Riley's British sense of humor. This was some years before England's CARRY ON films began making their successful way into American movie theatres.

Dracula Comes Home

When Lugosi was returning to the United States after the stage run of *Dracula* and the completion of the Old Mother Riley picture in England, he filmed a short television interview aboard ship in which he said, with something of a shrug of his shoulders, that since horror films and vampire roles were obviously the kinds in which the public liked him best, that he could continue to make such films.

He spoke rather resignedly here, seeming to have finally accepted on his own the great popularity of the horror and vampire career that fate had dealt him. For years he had been trying to shake the horror image, to no avail; but now he seemed to want to go straight-

Unfortunately, though, the early fifties were terrible years for horror films at the boxoffice and studios were not making very many at all. Even Universal had cut back their horror production schedule to almost nothing. So despite Lugosi's intentions, there was actually little work to be had for him. He had become so well known as a horror star, and particularly a *vampire* star, that producers and casting directors saw him only as that and offered him no other roles.

The last few years of Lugosi's career were rather disastrous ones. In 1953, he appeared in a weird exploitation horror film called *GLEN OR GLENDA?*, which was never released, though it was previewed one evening at a small, inconsequential little theatre in Los Angeles. Then he starred for producer Jack Broder in an embarrassing comedy titled *BELA LUGOSI MEETS A BROOKLYN GORILLA* in which he played a mad scientist living on an uncharted island who met up with *Duke Mitchell* and *Sammy Petrillo*, a couple of dead-ringers for the famed comedy team of *Dean Martin* and *Jerry Lewis*. Obviously Mitchell and Petrillo had been cast in the film *because* of their

likeness to Martin and Lewis, and lawsuits against them and the picture were filed almost immediately by Martin and Lewis' manager and agents.

That same year Lugosi also starred in another inept low-class horror film: *THE BRIDE OF THE MONSTER* from Rolling M Productions. Once again, Lugosi played a mad scientist, he and slave *Tor Johnson* trapping girl victims for brain experiments. Lugosi also had a pet monster in the film, a giant octopus that lived in a swamp near his house. The final, inevitable fight confrontation sequence between Lugosi and Johnson was particularly embarrassing because Lugosi had been feeling ill during the shooting and had lost much weight, and the double who substituted for him in the fight scene was not only heavier but a man who rather obviously looked exactly what he was: a double.

THE BLACK SLEEP (1956) was Bela Lugosi's last decent horror film. While not necessarily a classic, *THE BLACK SLEEP* still boasted the distinction of an all star cast of horror veterans with *Basil Rathbone*, *Lon Chaney*, *John Carradine* and *Akim Tamiroff*, and the film was effectively set in eighteenth century England where brain surgeon Rathbone was busily experimenting with brain transplants in an appropriately gloomy looking castle. Lugosi's role in the film was minimal, that of a mute servant named Casmir. (Old and ill at the time, Lugosi had trouble remembering his lines.) The picture, on the whole, was a respectable enough exercise in Gothic film horror and certainly was a well-intentioned and well-mounted production. Lugosi's last film, *PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE*, was anything but that.

PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE (1956) was a Bela Lugosi ripoff about a vampire and alien creatures raising corpses from graves and turning them into human zombies. Sometimes called *THE GRAVE ROBBERS FROM OUTER SPACE*, the film co-starred *Tor Johnson* and *Vampira* and featured Lugosi in only a very few scenes—including some home-movie shots of



Lugosi and Borland threaten the Terrified Young Couple, a fixture of 1930s horror movies, *Mark of the Vampire* being no exception.

Lugosi leaving his house and literally going for the morning paper. In the movie, this footage became Lugosi leaving his house for nefarious purposes.

Actually, Lugosi had died during production and the producer was using every bit of footage he had on the horror star, even repeating some scenes. In some scenes, a rather obvious double was substituted for Lugosi; overall, *PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE* was a pathetic climax to Bela Lugosi's career. He deserved better.

When he died, Bela Lugosi was buried—by his own choice—in his Dracula cape. He also was wearing the Dracula ring on his finger. Often while touring with *DRACULA* on stage he had, publicity agents claimed, slept at night in a coffin, because sleeping on the straight, flat, hard wood was good for a back ailment he had been suffering for many years then; but now, in 1956, Bela Lugosi was resting in his coffin forever. The man who had become Dracula to the world would rise no more to gesture with menace or seek the fresh warm blood of the living. Bela Lugosi was dead.

The legend of Bela Lugosi lives on, though. Death can never claim it. Lugosi's legend is immortal, everlastingly resurrected at new screenings of his films, whenever the people gather around a blazing fireplace or in some deep, black-shadowed pub and the talk turns to the darkling, blood-sucking horrors who ride the nightwinds; those much-feared vampire monsters who soar fire-eyed on blood-starved wings across a pale full moon, silently searching the lonely midnight hours for yet another terrified victim.

Then again, as it will always be, the undying name of *Bela Lugosi—Dracula—* is once more spoken by softly trembling lips.

Dracula dead?
Never!





BARNABAS:
DARK SHADOWS IN
BRIGHT AFTERNOON



Was Barnabas Collins a fiendish blood-sucking vampire? Or was he merely the victim of a cruel fate? Don Glut will tell all about *Dark Shadows*, the show that became the afternoon compulsion for a generation, just as earlier groups of young people faithfully followed *Space Patrol* and, earlier still, *Captain Midnight*.

by Don Glut

Willie Loomis was a neurotic with a particular interest in the history of the Collins family, the wealthy founders of the town of Collinsport, Maine. It was known that Willie was especially curious about one Barnabas Collins, an enigmatic member of the family who had lived—and presumably died—in the late 18th century. What people *didn't* know was that Willie believed that, in earlier days, deceased members of the Collins family were entombed with their jewels, much like Egyptian pharaohs of old. And the thought of all those beautiful gems and all that lovely gold just lying around in some corpse's tomb, gathering dust and mold and benefiting absolutely *no one* at all, was just too much for Willie to resist.

So, late one dark night, under a new moon and a starless, cloud-swept sky, Willie slipped onto the grounds of the Collins estate and went tomb-robbing.

The crypt he chose was that of Barnabas Collins.

Willie moved quickly and silently through the dank chamber, finding nothing at all until his questing fingers accidentally tripped the latch of a secret door. The crypt had *another room!* Where better to hide the family jewels, Willie thought excitedly. And in he went.

Willie Loomis found no jewels inside the secret room.

Instead, he found a coffin. Barnabas' coffin. A coffin



Barnabas prepares to take Maggie ("Josette" to his mind) as his bride. She seems to be wondering if she wants to marry an older man—at least one who's 170 years old.

sealed with wax and heavy chains. A coffin seemingly designed expressly to keep grave robbers out. Believing the coffin to be the treasure chest that he'd been searching for all the night, Willie smashed the chains and levered the lid off the ornate casket. And screamed as the perfectly preserved corpse lying inside the coffin reached up and grabbed him, holding him with a frightening, preternatural strength.

Poor Willie had never realized—never *dreamed*—that the chains on the coffin had been designed—not to keep robbers out—but to keep something far more horrible in!

Presently, a sharp knock sounded on the majestic oak door of the "big house" at Collinwood. Elizabeth Collins—the widowed matron of the estate—opened the door and found herself face-to-face with a tall, roughly handsome, oddly-formal gentleman.

"Hello," the man said, smiling cordially, "I am Barnabas Collins."

Thus ended perhaps the most important episode of **DARK SHADOWS**, television's original gothic horror soap opera, which premiered in the late 1960's, as part of ABC-TV's weekday afternoon schedule. The episode is important because it introduced to television viewers the most popular vampire ever to haunt the video waves, a character who—only a short while after his debut—had become one of the biggest stars on the air.

Barnabas Collins.

DARK SHADOWS was the artistic brain-child of Producer, *Dan Curtis*, the show designed as a replacement for a short-lived soap opera called, **NEVER TOO YOUNG**. Originally, **DARK SHADOWS** followed the formula of the standard gothic mystery novel that has become so popular in recent years. (You know the type of novels—the ones with virtually the same cover repeated *ad infinitum*, depicting a young woman fleeing



Jonathan Frid as Barnabas Collins in a fine portrait, showing a conflict between kindness and cruelty in a haunted face



Barnabas kisses the hand of Maggie Evans (Kathryn Leigh Scott) in whom he sees the re-incarnation of his lost Josette—but it's her neck he is really interested in.

from a dark and ominous mansion, in which only one window has a light).

The first episode of **DARK SHADOWS** brought young, innocent and naive Victoria Winters (the typical gothic novel heroine, right down to the "Victorian" name), played by *Alexandra Moltke*, to Collins mansion in Maine, where she was to work as a governess. These early installments centered upon the standard gothic conventions—secret panels, leering "red herrings" and brooding members of the Collins family. Supernatural elements, except for an occasional ghost, were often explained as hoaxes, or misinterpretations of perfectly natural phenomena. In short, the show was dull and, as a result, bombed in the ratings.

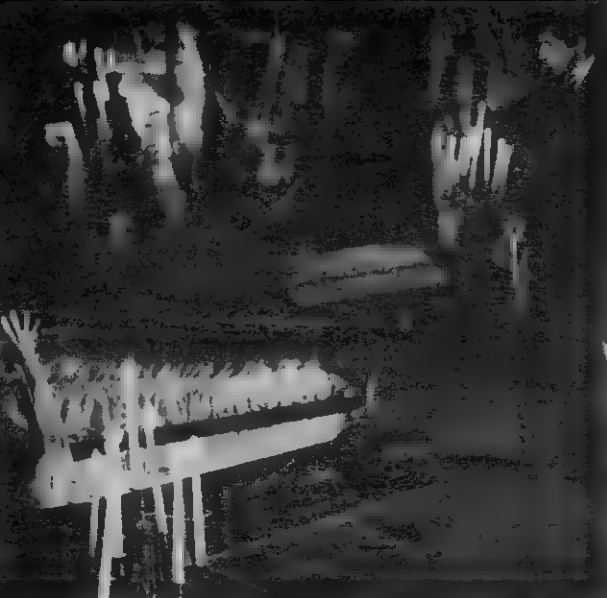
As an experiment, Curtis told his writer, *Sam Hall*, to introduce an element of true horror into the series—a supernatural vampire that would, it was hoped, also attract an audience of monster movie fans who might otherwise scorn a soap opera ostensibly intended for the housewife audience in those pre-Lib days. The vampire would be called Barnabas Collins and he would be portrayed by a fine Shakespearean actor named *Jonathan Frid*. Barnabas was to continue on the show for a few months, after which he would be destroyed and written out of the script. If all went well, his introduction would boost the ratings of **DARK SHADOWS** to a level of at least some respectability. No one involved with the program, least of all Frid himself, could have predicted just *how* high those coveted ratings would soar!

Jonathan Frid had been a relatively unknown actor until his debut on **DARK SHADOWS**, and the original characterization of Barnabas was anything but sympathetic as the 170 year-old vampire went about his fiendish ways. Yet, surprisingly, the viewing audience—particularly the women—took an immediate liking to this fascinating character. Frid began to receive fan mail by the bundle. And the more villainous his character became on the small home screen, the more adulatory letters he received, most of Frid's fan mail coming from frustrated females who squealed delightfully at his ignominious actions.

At first, Barnabas' vampiric condition was merely hinted at—references to his never being seen during the day, the lack of mirrors in the "Old House" where he lived on the Collins estate—as was the revelation that he was really "dead." But when Barnabas finally bared his fangs and bit pretty young Carolyn Stoddard (*Nancy Barrett*) on the neck, the ratings skyrocketed higher than ever. Frid received apparently serious letters from women begging him to bite *them* on the neck. The sexual aspects of vampirism were always present for anyone caring to probe beneath the glaring red eyes and flowing cloaks, and with Jonathan Frid's sudden birth as a star and "sex symbol," those implications were as apparent as ever.

DARK SHADOWS, a show which had been in danger of cancellation because of poor ratings, was almost instantaneously the most popular offering on daytime





"Come on out—you have a visitor," Barnabas seems to be saying to his colleague in the coffin.

television. The storyline of the initial Barnabas Collins plot continued as planned, somehow always avoiding the term "vampire." With one difference: the popular Barnabas could not be so abruptly dispatched by a wooden stake or silver bullet as originally planned. The fans simply wouldn't allow it! Barnabas, who had been introduced as a temporary character, was now *the* star of the show.

Instead of destroying Barnabas, Sam Hall decided to show his previously untold origin. During a seance, Victoria Winters was transported back in time to the Collinwood of 1795. Confused, believing herself still to be in the world of the Sixties, Vickie approached the Collinwood house to meet a very human Barnabas, dressed as an 18th Century gentleman and standing in the brilliant rays of the sun.

This first of DARK SHADOWS' time travel stories showed that Barnabas Collins was in love with the beautiful Josette (*Kathryn Leigh Scott*). But when Barnabas spurned the love of a comely blonde witch named Angelique (*Lara Parker*), the latter placed a curse on him—warning him that tragedy would strike his family, that he would never know true love and that he would never know the peace of death.

The last part of Angelique's curse was realized when Barnabas was attacked by a vampire bat. Dying from the creature's bite, Barnabas was laid to rest in the tomb. However, Angelique decided it better to destroy Barnabas before he could rise from his coffin. It was during this episode—wherein Angelique and her seedy lackey Ben (*Thayer David*) went to drive a stake into Barnabas' heart—that the word "vampire" was first used on DARK SHADOWS. (From that point onward, the term was used without reserve.) Angelique never drove home that stake. Barnabas killed her before she had the chance.

When Barnabas' father Joshua (*Louis Edmonds*) confronted the son he believed to be dead in the tower room of the Collins mansion, the pompous skeptic was totally perplexed. His face torn by anguish, Barnabas looked into his father's eyes and confessed, "I'm a vampire!"

Barnabas eventually implored his father to end his torment. But Joshua, unable to fire the silver bullets into his own flesh and blood, went to his casket, placed a silver crucifix upon his chest, then chained the coffin shut in the hopes that no one would ever find the secret room of the crypt.

All of a sudden, Barnabas had become a sympathetic character, a tragic figure doomed to roam the dark corridors of the night and drink the blood of the living. When angered, Barnabas could still become as ruthless as Count Dracula himself, but it was this "victim of a cruel fate" interpretation of the role that his fans seemed to like the most. *This* characterization of Barnabas (as opposed to the original unscrupulous fiend) returned, along with the storyline, to the time of the 1960s.

Barnabas Collins' fame was only beginning to realize itself. Before long his image became affixed to model kits, games, a series of paperback books and a still-running series of comic books; fan clubs, posters, records, bubblegum cards, even a syndicated newspaper strip. Barnabas and his alter ego, Jonathan Frid, had become a nation-wide sensation. The country had suddenly become vampire conscious.

Now, producer Dan Curtis realized the direction that DARK SHADOWS must take. If one vampire would boost the ratings, then surely DARK SHADOWS would be unparalleled in the competition game if even *more* monsters were added to the cast of characters. Barnabas then proceeded to become involved with a mad scientist—who was stitching together his own version of the Frankenstein Monster, a giant named Adam (*Robert Rodan*). Barnabas' life force was transferred to Adam—which had the double effect of bringing the monster to life amid crackling electrical apparatus, and also providing the first of the vampire's many "cures" of his undead condition.

After the introduction of Adam, Sam Hall heaped a deluge of new versions of classic horrors on the DARK SHADOWS audiences. There were werewolves, warlocks, demons, Jekylls-and-Hydes, Lovecraft monsters, crawling hands, Dorian Grays, zombies, you name it!—not to mention more excursions into the past, into



parallel worlds (with the same actors playing different parts), and the introduction of a parade of countless new vampires. It was still Barnabas, however, who remained most popular, with Frid eventually receiving star billing along with the regular star of the series, *Joan Bennett*. Despite all the different time and parallel world stories presented on *DARK SHADOWS*, Jonathan Frid never played any other character except Barnabas—that is, until the last season of the program in 1970-71. Among other plots being adapted simultaneously, the show was doing a version of *WUTHERING HEIGHTS*. Frid portrayed Bramwell, a character patterned after Heathcliff, of the original novel by Emily Bronte. It was February of 1971 on a portentous afternoon for *DARK SHADOWS*. With the conclusion of the *WUTHERING HEIGHTS* episode, a girl was found in the woods, apparently the victim of a vampire. Bramwell looked self-consciously at the portrait of his ancestor, Barnabas, hanging on the wall. A new vampire episode was seemingly about to begin. But no, as Thayer David explained in his voice-over narration of the scene, this time the animal-like marks on the victim's throat really were made by an animal. There were no more vampires on the series. No more witches or even sliding panels. This was the last episode of *DARK SHADOWS*.

Shortly before the series met its final end, Dan Curtis created a fine and lasting tribute for the program's fans in an amply-budgeted MGM feature-length film entitled *HOUSE OF DARK SHADOWS*. The movie retained the soap opera's cast and basic story line of the original Barnabas Collins television story. Barnabas is freed by Willie Loomis (*John Karlen*), then proceeds to the Collinwood mansion, identifying himself as a cousin from England and a descendant of the "original" Barnabas Collins. Willie becomes to Barnabas what Renfield was to Dracula, as the vampire tries to make a bride of lovely Maggie Evans (Ms. Scott, again), a reincarnation of his lost Josette. During the events that follow, "cousin" Carolyn Stoddard becomes a fetching vampire who is eventually trapped in her tomb by the police and staked through the heart. Barnabas himself is temporarily cured by the frustrated Dr. Julia Hoffman

(*Grayson Hall*, wife of the film and TV show's writer). But when Barnabas rejects her love and goes after young Maggie, the vengeful doctor reverses the experiment, causing him to revert to his true age (thanks to an incredible make-up job by Dick Smith). By the end of the film, almost everyone is either dead, a vampire or a dead vampire. Barnabas prepares to make his "Josette" his vampire bride until Willie—in love with her himself—impales him through the back with an arrow.

HOUSE OF DARK SHADOWS not only preserved the elements of the television show in a handsomely-mounted film, but also established Dan Curtis as an important director in the horror genre. Curtis kept *HOUSE* moving without taking away from the gothic atmosphere. The trapping and staking of Carolyn is superb, as is the final sequence, showing a black-cloaked Barnabas meeting an extremely graphic death amid the fog and shadows of his island retreat. Despite what the squeamish may say, gore is a part of the horror film. Dan Curtis elevated the gore in *HOUSE OF DARK SHADOWS* to the status of art.

The *DARK SHADOWS* television series is often condemned by "purists" as being a mish-mash of old Universal horror films cliches, stretched out over several years. Granted, the show suffered from any number of faults. But *DARK SHADOWS* also provided we monster aficionados with a half-hour-a-day, five-day-a-week excursion into realms we've grown to love. Characters like Barnabas Collins were mourned by thousands of viewers when the series was finally canceled. Since the series was videotaped, Curtis had considered rerunning it. But apparently not enough interest was generated on the part of the network executives.

Want to see *DARK SHADOWS* back on the air? Perhaps if enough fans follow the example set by the "Trekkies," flooding Dan Curtis Productions or the networks with mail, everyone's favorite afternoon vampire will again be attacking the various members of the Collins family Monday-through-Friday. This writer for one, would be glad to see a return of the original series.

I miss *Dark Shadows*.

And I miss a vampire by the name of Barnabas. 



Barnabas and "Josette" prepare for a vampire wedding ceremony in an appropriate setting.

Monstermail



Dear Jim,

...and I will start in the first issue of **MONSTERS OF THE MOVIES**. I'll be looking forward to future issues.

PAUL BLAISDEL

It's great to hear from Paul Blaisdel who created many of the more fiendish creatures in horror movies, such as **THE SHE CREATURE** and **IT**. Paul often wore those costumes himself—as well as designing them—making him a full-fledged movie monster himself.

Thanks for your kind words. Paul and me'll be looking forward to future comments from you.

People

Concerning the newest venture into large sized magazines by Marvel—**MONSTERS OF THE MOVIES**—I must say that it looks very promising. I feel, however, that you must not confine yourself to horror movies exclusively. Why not cover all those monsters in science fiction films and the various creatures that have stalked about the television screen.

I have only one negative comment about issue #1 of **MONSTERS OF THE MOVIES** and that is the inclusion of the comic strip, "The Demon That Devoured Hollywood." Although a fine story, comics do not belong in **MONSTERS OF THE MOVIES**. The magazine should be exclusively text. By the way, where was "The Demon..." first published? It is obviously a reprint story, as Barry Smith hasn't done any work for you in awhile.

CRAIG PETERS

40 Yale Street
Garden City, N.Y. 11530

We'd like to hear from the rest of you Marvovites about using comic related material in our monstrous mag. We'll probably be using less of them in the future, but as we've stated time and again, it's your letters that guide us in the direction of all our books.

The Demon that Devoured Hollywood was first printed in **TOWER OF SHADOWS** #5, and seeing as it was one of the first collaborations between our Editor-in-Chief Roy Thomas and the talented artist, Barry Smith, we felt it warranted a viewing, especially since millions of readers missed it on the first go-round.

And anyway, Craig, it couldn't have hurt that much, could it? Shewesh did we leave ourselves open with a question like that but we'll hope you won't want to hurt our ghoulish little feelings that much.

Dear Mr. Harmon,

Just yesterday, I purchased a copy of the first issue of **MONSTERS OF THE MOVIES** magazine. Some day, believe me, this issue will be sought after with monstrous zeal (gag) by future horror movie fans. I'm one of the lucky ones... I managed to pick up a copy before it goes up in price.

I'm writing this letter as soon as possible because I want very much for it to have a good chance of being published, and you all know what the mains are like these days. There's a horror story all in its own, right there!

Here's a commentary on your first issue and some suggestions for future ones.

MONSTERS OF THE MARVELS and **EDITORIAL**. BULL

...too much-razzle dazzle, informative-without-being boring, funny-without-being-punny articles, I've never heard of **THE LEMON GROVE KIDS MEET THE MONSTERS** but it sounds really tacky.

KING KONG, MONARCH OF MONSTERS: This was a fine article. I particularly enjoyed the symbolic associations Doug Moench (who has the makings of a fine film critic) made about that classic. Some of those symbolic associations I had never thought about before.

KARLOFF AT THE RAVEN'S CASTLE: Wow! An ultimate... What can one say, except that Ron Haydock has the knack of remaining friendly and respectful while not condescending and agreeing with everything the person says that he is interviewing. I am eagerly awaiting the second part.

THE DRACULA RIP-OFFS: Unfortunately this article just didn't tell me anything I didn't already know. Don Glut can be a good author (as his book, **TRUE VAMPIRES OF HISTORY** testifies) but he must have finished this one in a big hurry to include it in the first issue. The only contribution to **PLAN NINE FROM OUTER SPACE**.

KEEP YOUR COFFIN DRY, NEVADA. Never tite but a thoroughly predictable tale and a waste of pages.

THE LIFE STORY OF KING KONG: Quite good. Much better than the preceding article, **THE MANY SONS OF KONG**. Jim Harmon displayed a good sense of imagination here, unlike **KEEP YOUR COFFIN DRY, NEVADA**.

Now for some suggestions. I'd like to see a series of... people like Dan Curtis, Roger Corman, Gene Roddenberry, i.e., the real creative talents in the film industry. I'd also enjoy seeing a contest of some kind—voting on the best horror and science fiction films. How about a series of articles on "lost" or "rare" films, including stills?

That's all for now. I'll try to write to you after every issue, so as to give you comments on individual articles and the magazine's general progress.

Who knows, I might wind up as your un-official "Fan Critic."

hope you don't mind that too much.

MATTHEW SOJA
132 Boswell Ave
Norwich, Conn.

We don't mind your reviews and criticisms at all, Matt. In fact, it's the only way we can learn what readers like yourself want to see inside these pages. And that goes for the rest of you horror fanatics out there. So pull yourselves out of your dark shadows and scratch down your views.

You might find it interesting to know that the title **KEEP YOUR COFFIN DRY, NEVADA** is a take-off on one of Carlton Morse's **I LOVE A MYSTERY** radio epics, **BURY YOUR DEAD, ARIZONA**, which has these classic radio heroes, Jack, Doc and Reggie, tangling with an evil magician and a girl who can change into a wolf during the dead of night. Any of you **Marvovites** out there want to hear more about the encounters with terror that Carlton Morse's characters faced? If so, follow Matt's example and drop us a line.

We'll be waiting. Don't let us down here, else will send both Jim and Tony, with Tony on Jim's shoulder, to get you. And if you thought the bogey man was tough well wait'll you tangle with these guys on a fog-swept night.





Doa
Congratulations on **MONSTERS OF THE MOVIES #1**.

are terrific. Those stills from **KING KONG** were great. They don't make monster movies like that anymore. I wish I knew how they did it. The photography was fantastic.

you proved it in **THE WEIRD WORLD OF REAL LIFE MONSTERS. WOW!** I've been interested in those kinds of mysteries for a long time. I think that some of them are fact. People shouldn't call other people crazy when someone claims to have seen something ... extra-

do anything in the **AN** ...
APES? After seeing what you did with **KING KONG**, I

BARRY PLAYER
Kenora, Ontario

Planet of the Apes? Where have we heard that title before?

Labels stands prominently over the collective shoulders of the mystic letters page answers and threatens us with impending doom if we don't pick up on your comment and tell you that we have a **WHOLE** **BLACK**. We devoted to those apes you mentioned. Mike Flagg is illustrating new tales, inspired by the films

and scintillatingly scripted by Doug Moonch, while there are more articles in the book than one can scarcely believe. And it's all inside the pages of a book called ... uh ... oh ... yes, ... **PLANET OF THE APES**. Original title that, don't you think?
Gentleman

I read your latest publication, **MONSTERS OF THE MOVIES**, with great interest. And I have some suggestions. The format of **M.O.M.** should be both sophisticated and serious. Please get rid of all the puns, and that section, **OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF GHOULS**, must go! Also, don't devote so much space to things like **FRANKENSTEIN**, **DRACULA**, **KING KONG**, **GODZILLA** and all those crummy Japanese monster films. I've read hundreds of articles on those things already in other monster magazines.

I thought the article on **THE NIGHT STALKER** was the magazine's best piece. But I think real credit for

I would love to see you do an interview with Dan Curtis. Curtis has done more to produce "made for TV" horror movies than anyone else. I also think some credit has to go to Robert Cobert. Cobert has scored all the music for Curtis' productions. A Dan Curtis Production

chilling background music. He has to be the best music

scorer for horror films since James Bernard.
I would definitely like to see **M.O.M.** do some articles on **DARK SHADOWS**. In **DRACULA LIVES #3**, it was mentioned in the letters pages that an article on **#5**. Since this never manifested, I would suggest that you combine this material on Barnabas with other **DARK SHADOWS** articles for publication in **M.O.M.**
DARK SHADOWS had vampires, werewolves, witches, back to the years 1797, 1840 and 1897, via the I Ching. Once Barnabas Collins and Dr. Julia Hoffman traveled to the year 1995! How's that for a former daily TV series. I'd easily rate **DARK SHADOWS** as the best TV series ever aired.
So I'd certainly hope that **M.O.M.** would publish some detailed information on Barnabas' battles against Angeouque, Nicholas Blair, Count Petofi, the Leviathans, Judah Zachary, and the other occult foes of Collinwood.
I also think **M.O.M.** should run a poll among readers for the best fantasy and horror films produced each year. You should also include "made for TV" fantasy films for this poll. Such productions as **THE NIGHT STALKER** and **GENESIS II** have proven that the television industry can produce imaginative films also.

Richard Clark
P.O. Box 3
Pekin, Indiana 47165

Well, Richard, as you see if you're reading this issue of **MONSTER OF THE MOVIES**—if you're not reading this issue, Richard: for shame, for shame!—your wish has come true, in the form of a major article on Dan Curtis' resident vampire, Barnabas Collins, written by **M.O.M.** staffer and highly respected freelance writer in his own right, **DOH**! We hope you find it worth the wait.
Now as for your lettered criticisms here goes:

As far as beginning things like **FRANKENSTEIN**, **DRACULA**, **KING KONG**, **GODZILLA**, and all those crummy Japanese animated monster films in favor of increased coverage of **DARK SHADOWS**, in all its myriad plot-twists I'm afraid we can't promise anything right now. Because, even though YOU have read hundreds of articles on those films, lots of our readers haven't! And, despite the continuing popularity of the series, and its star Jonathan Frid of whom you'll be reading in other black-and-white mags in months to come—there just isn't enough material available to justify devoting a majority of the space in **MONSTERS OF THE MOVIES** to **DARK SHADOWS**, denser though the series may be. Besides, no one—especially a big-time mag like us—should ever get locked into one set pattern.

Also **FRANKENSTEIN**, **DRACULA** and the others are very popular with many of our readers and they should be able to score their favorites in those pages also. We think you can understand that. Supposing some reader insisted that we not print any articles concerning **DARK SHADOWS**, you'd certainly be disappointed if we conceded to those wishes.

Fear not, it's not about to happen.
And this about brings us to a close on our first letters page but we'll be looking forward to you making your contributions to this space and keeping this page as interesting as the rest of **M.O.M.** We know you can do it, Tiger. Don't keep us waiting, hear? You know how we start to grow impatient when those letters of comment fail to flood our offices (SNARL, SNORT, GROWL and other bestial sounds.) So don't wait until tomorrow; scrawl out your missives, pre and con, along with whatever other comments, shopping lists, suggestions, frankly aberrations etc. that you care to burden us with. You know how much better you feel when you get all these things off your chest.

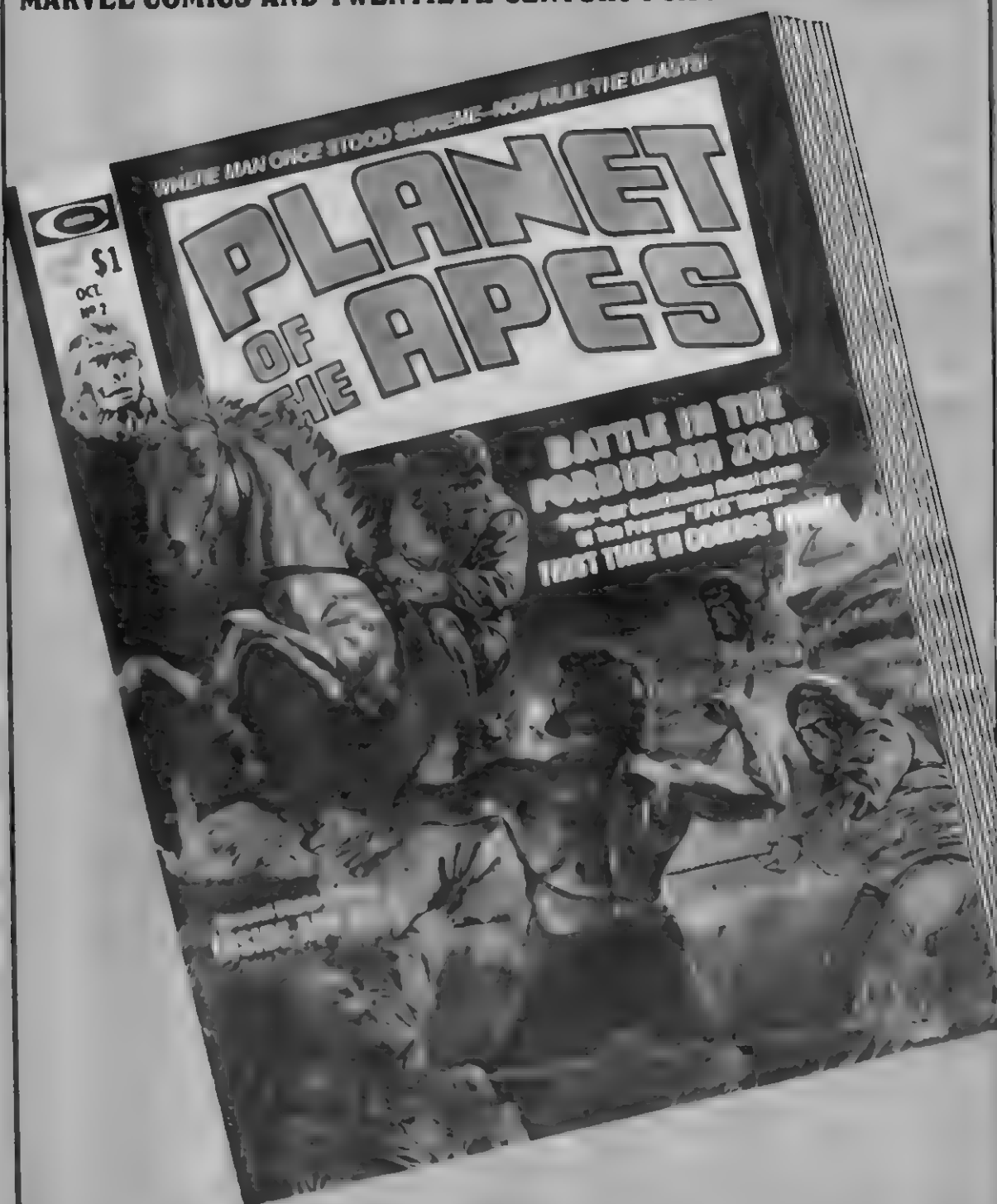
Sheesh, do you think we could get paid a psychiatrist's wages?

Send your letters, cards, telegrams, petitions, posters, etc. to:

MONSTERS OF THE MOVIES
575 MADISON AVE.
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10022



MARVEL COMICS AND TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX PROUDLY PRESENT:



SECOND SUPER-SIZED ISSUE—84 BIG PAGES—ON SALE AUGUST 27

BULLPEN WEST

This introduction to the latest issue of *Monsters of the Movies* is being written right in the heart of Hollywood and Vine. Yet some people say that Hollywood no longer exists. Not that the Capitol Record Tower has been torn down, or that the famed Chinese Theatre has been demolished, but that the idea of Hollywood as the home of motion pictures has dissolved.

It is true that the Old Hollywood of Boris Karloff and Bela Lugosi working at Universal Studios, making a set number of horror features a year is no more. Television has changed that. In the movie business, almost no one is guaranteed that any picture released is going to be a success at the box-office.

There's a different atmosphere today. Not only has the studio system changed, the people have changed as well, even the stars. A few years ago I ran into the latest Dracula—Jack Palance—at a Steve Allen TV show on which we both appeared. His latest horror work at that time was *JEKYLL AND HYDE*, a TV movie. I approached him easily, without going through a mob of yes-men and flunkies, and Palance talked to me frankly and cordially. Don Glut was there, and asked Palance if he were going to appear in Dan Curtis' TV version of *FRANKENSTEIN* as had been rumored; Palance said "No." That conversation could not have happened a few years ago when stars were surrounded by studio people and often told whom they could speak to, and what they could say.

More recently, I visited the beach house on the California coast being occupied by Peter Boyle, who portrays the Monster in Mel Brooks' *YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN*. Also there were Rob Reiner of *ALL IN THE FAMILY*, his wife Penny, director Bob Greenberg, and others. It was a weekend gathering much the same as people all over the country have. There was no wild party. We discussed the latest news events, the latest movies. Greenberg supervised a rib barbecue of somewhat greater than normal dimensions. Rob Reiner and I exchanged a few questions on nostalgic subjects. Boyle and Reiner put on wet-suits and did a bit of body-surfing.

Naturally, I asked Peter Boyle about his work in the satire (but a loving one) of *FRANKENSTEIN*. Mr. Boyle was not terribly talkative. Yes, he had enjoyed



The latest of a distinguished list of actors to portray Dracula—Jack Palance—leads off *Monsters of the Movies*' Special Vampire Issue

working in the film. Yes, Mel Brooks was fun to work with. No, he had not had to do anything risky in the picture—well maybe climbing part way up a ladder in the awkward Monster suit. Yes, he had liked horror movies when he had been a kid, but he had liked all kinds of movies. He really did not consider himself "a monster movie groupie."

Such a quiet afternoon on the beach could not have been possible in the glittering heyday of Karloff and Lugosi, Clark Gable and Jean Harlow. If I had been alive when the original *FRANKENSTEIN* was made, I probably could not even have managed to talk with Karloff for a few minutes, even though he was yet to become a major star.

I don't know if Hollywood today is better or worse than the Old Hollywood—but I do know it is certainly different.

—JIM HARMON,
Hollywood, Calif.

SCOPE... MONSTERSCOPE... I

What's Happening in Horror & Fantasy News & Reviews

by Ron Haydock

BRIDES OF HORROR: According to Atlas Films' new horror release, *CRYPT OF THE LIVING DEAD*, King Louis VII, during his crusade to the Holy Land in the 12th century, had to bury his beautiful bride Hannah alive in the secret caves of Vampire Island, where she has lain undisturbed in her tomb ever since. Now, though, 700 years later, Professor Bolton and his son Chris arrive on Vampire Island and rediscover Hannah's secret burial site. But when they announce their plans to unearth Hannah's tomb for archaeological purposes, the native islanders are seized with terror, opposing the excavation because of the horrifying legend of Hannah the Undying.

The ghastly legend says that once she's freed from her tomb, she will become a werewolf, hungering for the fresh warm blood of the living and then, having sucked enough blood, she will become a *vampire*! Despite this legend, Professor Bolton and Chris begin their excavations and soon enough learn that while some legends are only that and nothing more, others are not. Far more than myth, Hannah quickly proves that she is, in fact, terribly real as she rises from her tomb and shrieks through the night hours to begin a new reign of vampire terror that threatens the lives of everyone on the island!

Atlas Films' *CRYPT OF THE LIVING DEAD* stars *Andrew Prine*, *Mark Damon*, *Patty Sheppard* and *Teresa Gimpera* as Hannah the Undying Monster; and the new horror film was directed by *Ray Danton*, who previously helmed *THE DEATHMASTER* with *Robert Quarry*, another offbeat vampire movie.

Boxoffice International Pictures also has a new bride of horror on their hands: *Anne Sparrow*, starring in *THE SINFUL DWARF*. Ms. Sparrow plays a young bride who moves into a somewhat creepy old house with her husband, played by *Tony Eades*. The creepy old house is owned by a creepy old woman, Clara

Keller, who lives there with her creepy son, Torben, who just happens to be a three-foot dwarf. Both, it seems, possess somewhat anti-social attitudes. Like capturing beautiful young women and torturing them unto death. Which kind of puts Ms. Sparrow in a rather delicate position, as her husband is often away on business. In the tried-and-true tradition of the horror/gothic genre, Torben and his demented mother capture the young heroine and chain her up with the rest of their victims.

Re-enter the traveling husband, baffled and worried by the sudden, unexplained disappearance of his wife. It's all up to him now: will his wife live, or will she become yet another victim of *THE SINFUL DWARF*!?

DRACULAS ON THE LOOSE. Dracula stars *Christopher Lee* and *John Carradine* have both been keeping busy in new films. Having completed Hammer Films' *THE SATANIC RITES OF DRACULA* with *Peter Cushing*, Lee has filmed *THE WICKER MAN* (which he considers one of his better pictures);

starred with *Jon Finch* and *Emma Cohen* in *THE SPIRIT OF ENGLAND*; met *Joan Collins* in *DARK PLACES*; costarred with *Charlton Heston*, *Raquel Welch* and *Oliver Reed* in Alexander Dumas' *THE THREE MUSKETEERS*; and stars as Scaramanga, *THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN GUN*, a professional assassin who will destroy anybody for the mere service charge of one million dollars. Lee's Van Helsing in this Ian Fleming thriller is *Roger Moore* as *James Bond*.

Meanwhile, in Mexico City, John Carradine has been filming *MARY, MARY, BLOODY MARY* with *David Young* and *Christina Ferrare* for producer *Henri Bollinger*, while simultaneously appearing on horror screens everywhere in *THE HOUSE OF SEVEN CORPSES* with *John Ireland*; *BLOOD OF GHASTLY HORROR* with *Tommy Kirk*, and in *DR. DEATH*--who is an original horror character not to be confused with either *Vincent Price's Dr. Death* in AIP's new *MADHOUSE* or the infamous *Dr. Death* who appeared in



Vernon Potts contemplates the equipment that will turn him into a wild-eyed, uncontrollable beast! Will the hero of *Horror High* become a monster or just a 1950's style rock star?

MONSTERSCOPE... MONSTE

MONSTERSCOPE... MONSTER

pulp magazines back in the thirties.

Besides Christopher Lee's new Hammer Dracula, there are other new Draculas loose on the horror screen: DRACULA's BLOOD starring Tina Sainz; DRACULA's GREAT LOVE with Paul Naschy and Haydee Politoff, and SON OF DRACULA, a horror musical produced by Ringo Starr and featuring Harry Nilsson as the vampire, with Ringo himself in the role of Merlin the Magician.

MANSIONS OF EVIL: *Burnt Offerings* by Robert Marasco (Delacorte Press, \$4.95) is a wickedly diabolical novel of mounting horror that finds Ben and Marian Rolfe and young son David renting a uniquely evil summer house in Upstate New York, that is abysmally rundown when they arrive and, only a few weeks later, after various deaths and the like, looks wonderfully "alive" and well cared for. Besides the total, all-encompassing atmosphere of horror that surrounds the weird mansion, there's a grim dark secret right in the old house too: a locked room wherein resides Mrs. Allardyce, a woman in her eighties who never ventures out of the room and whose presence is never seen—only felt—until the final climactic moments of excruciating horror that macabrely possess the Rolfe family.

Evelyn Berekman's *The Victorian Album* (Doubleday, \$4.95) is another weird tale about a mansion of unspeakable evil, this one located in the London suburb of Clapham, and rented by Lorna Teasdale—who possesses the psychic gift of contact with powers beyond the physical world—and her niece Christabel. Probing the ancient, dusty secrets hidden in the attic, Lorna Teasdale uncovers a album of Victorian photographs, and then packets of letters a century old that begin relating the mystifying history of a strange, perplexing murder whose phantom fingers begin reaching out through the ages to grasp Lorna in a modern re-enactment of this century-old horror.



That's one of the Living Dead from the Crypt of recruiting a new room-mate.

Burnt Offerings and *The Victorian Album* are both horror novels in the tradition of *The Uninvited* and *The Innocents* and are not for the weak of heart. So be warned!

SHOCKING SPECIAL EFFECTS: Universal's EARTHQUAKE! starring Charlton Heston, Ava Gardner, Lorne Greene, Genevieve Bujold, Barry Sullivan and Lloyd Nolan is a big budget special effects picture about a future day when Los Angeles is destroyed by a devastating earthquake. Not content with putting the mind-boggling special effects on the movie screen alone, however, Universal will literally be jolting the audiences as well, because theatres playing the film will be specially equipped to vibrate right along with all the earthquaking action happening up there on the big screen. It's a new concept in movie going and if it proves successful, EARTHQUAKE! may herald the coming of even more such special special-effects epics.



A lady vampire at her favorite sport from Crypt of the Living Dead, an Atlas Films release.

ESCOPE... MONSTERSCOPE

SCOPE... MONSTERSCOPE... MONSTERSCOPE EXTRA

Bulletins about all the latest Monsters of the Movies!

THE WICKER MAN IS COMING! Starring *Christopher Lee, Ingrid Pitt* and *Edward Woodward*, Warner Brothers' new color film, *THE WICKER MAN* (produced in England by British Lion Films) tells the eerie, barbaric tale of pagan fertility rites that go back over a thousand years, to the days when Christianity was still locked in fierce battle with the older religions—the Druidic Cults, the Norse Pantheon, etc—for the 'hearts and minds' of the people of northern Europe and the British Isles. Long thought extinct, these beliefs have suddenly re-surfaced on a remote—and peaceful—Scottish island, ruled over by Lord Summerisle (Lee), a suave and ruthless despot who is Patriarch of the islanders' Dark God cult.

Warner Brothers calls *THE WICKER MAN* a very off-beat film that defies conventional classification—even for horror films—and Christopher Lee himself has said that he considers this one of the most satisfying pictures he's ever appeared in, calling Lord Summerisle his best role and the film itself, the best written film he's ever made.

Which is no surprise, considering that *THE WICKER MAN* was written by *Anthony Shaffer*, whose credits include the Tony-award winning mystery play, *SLEUTH*, and Alfred Hitchcock's latest thriller, *FRENZY*. Shaffer based his screenplay on actual pagan rituals and beliefs that are said to still exist today, even in Scotland. Even the film's musical score reflects this desire for accuracy; it's a contemporary folk score—taken from ancient lyrics—that is used to express the superstitious beliefs of the natives of Lord Summerisle's haunted island.

Directed by *Robin Hardy*, the film co-stars *Ingrid Pitt*—who previously starred as *COUNTESS DRACULA* and *Carmilla*, the She-Vampire (in *THE VAMPIRE LOVERS*). Starring along with Ms. Pitt are actress/author *Diane Cilento*—as the High Priestess—and *Britt Ekland*.

NEFARIOUS DOINGS: American-International's *MARK OF THE DEVIL, PART III*—starring *Anton Diffring, Erica Blain* and *Reggie Nadler*—is a sequel to 1972's *MARK OF THE DEVIL* (which starred *Herbert Lom, Gaby Fuchs* and *Reggie Nadler*). This new Hallmark Film—like the first—deals with the Inquisition, the efforts of the Catholic Church to stamp out witchcraft and satanism; and, again like *MARK OF THE DEVIL*, this film is based on actual historical fact, even including artifacts and torture instruments from that historical period as set props.



This is *THE WICKER MAN* himself, one of the most unconventional monsters in the history of horror

Directed by *Adrian Hoven*, *MARK OF THE DEVIL, PART II* chronicles the campaign of the Countess von Solmenau to remove from office and punish the sadistic officials who had murdered her husband while the Count was trying to rescue a suspected witch from medieval torture and death. Unfortunately, these same witch hunters capture the Countess. They then proceed to torture both her and her young son until both innocents sign 'confessions' to the effect that they are practicing witches and devout Satan-worshippers, after which the Countess is ordered executed for her 'crimes against God.'

American International also has *DERANGED* in release. Not unlike Robert Block's *PSYCHO*, *DERANGED* too is about an insane murderer, and is also based on a factual happening. Starring *Robert Blossom, Cosette Lee, Micki Moore* and *Leslie Carlson*, *DERANGED* depicts Blossom as a madman who's been

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MONSTERSCOPE... MONSTEI

taking care of his cruel mother for years. After she dies, he becomes so despondent that he digs up her coffin and brings her corpse back to his house. Then, to make company for her, he returns to the graveyard and digs up other corpses and keeps *them* in the house, too. But Blossom doesn't stop there. Next he starts murdering living girls and begins filling his house of horrors with *their* corpses as well! Where it will all end, nobody knows...

COLLECTING MONSTERS: *Jim Harmon's Nostalgia Catalogue* (J.P. Tarcher, \$4.95) is not only a nostalgic trip back to Golden Age Radio, Movies, Comics, Pulp Magazines and Dixie Cup Lids but the book (designed to look like a cereal box) is also a very informative guide to *collecting* Nostalgia, and is indispensable to everybody interested in buying radio programs, horror/monster movie stills and posters, or rare premium items like a Buck Rogers No. U-235 Atomic Pistol or a Captain Midnight Secret Squadron Decoder Badge.

Besides the entertaining text, *Harmon's Nostalgia Catalogue* is heavily illustrated with photos of collectible items (including a cover reproduction of *Marvel's All Winners #4* comic with Captain America, The Human Torch and Sub-Mariner). It tells you where you might be able to pick up some choice items for your collection, and also the prices many of these items are worth today. For example, *Marvel Mystery Comics #1* (Nov 1939), has been known to sell for \$500 or more while a large color poster from *Frankenstein Meets The Wolf Man* from the Forties might be purchased from a listed dealer for around \$50.

With Harmon's colorful book you also get a free Secret Agent Moustache and—among other items on the back cover—a Bonus Star. Collect five Bonus Stars, send them to Jim Harmon and you'll earn a Mark of Appreciation: a genuine Thank You letter with his name and picture on it!

HORROR FILM FESTIVAL: DEVILS, DEMONS, ANGELS, and GHOSTS was the cinematic theme of a horror film festival held last June at the Los Angeles Museum of Art. Showing two features a night, the Festival screened well over thirty classic films, among them: *MASQUE OF RED DEATH* (Vincent Price, Hazel Court); *THE HAUNTING* (Julie Harris, Claire Bloom; directed by Robert Wise); *CURSE OF THE DEMON* (Dana Andrews); *THE BLACK CAT* (Boris Karloff, Bela Lugosi); *THE INNOCENTS* (Deborah Kerr); *HORROR HOTEL* (Christopher Lee); and many little known, or seldom seen thrillers, such as *BEAUTY AND THE DEVIL* (Directed by Rene Clair in 1952); *THE UNIVITED* (Ray Milland, 1944); *SIMON OF THE*

DESERT (Claudio Brook, Silvia Pinal, 1966) and *DANTE'S INFERNO* (Spencer Tracy, 1935).

Festival Footnote: Right outside the walls of the Museum of Art you can find the famed *La Brea Tar Pits*, a pond of still-bubbling black tar where—millions of years ago—mammoth dinosaurs met their deaths, when they became stuck in the tar and were then pulled down into the pits. Reconstructions of towering mammoths now are on display at the edge of the pits, which are fenced off to prevent any *humans* from getting trapped in the prehistoric tar.



Left: For his role in the unconventional *WICKER MAN*, Christopher Lee dresses in a somewhat atypical manner for him, Scottish kilts.



Right: Diane Cilento proves herself a hot number as the priestess in *THE WICKER MAN*.

RSCOPE... MONSTERSCOPE

SCOPE... MONSTERSCOPE... I

Meanwhile though, producer Ray Dennis Steckler's **THE MANIACS ARE LOOSE** and **THE LEMON GROVE KIDS MEET THE MONSTERS** (written by Ron Haydock and Jim Harmon) are terrorizing movie houses and drive-ins with their own brand of monstrous special effects showmanship. Both movies are highlighted by moments when the monsters in the movies (maniacs with axes in one, a squad of living mummies in the other) break loose from the horror screen to rampage freely through the audience. The 'live' monster antics are the brainstorm of distributor Joe Karston, who used to appear on stage himself as a professional magician.

CLASSIC TERROR: Edgar Allan Poe, Mary Shelly, Jules Verne and Edgar Rice Burroughs are all represented on the screen in new thriller-chillers scheduled for release shortly:

THE SPECTRE OF EDGAR ALLAN POE stars Robert Walker Jr. and Tom Drake in a horror tale about a man possessed by the ghost of Poe; *Andy Warhol* has filmed Mary Shelley's **FRANKENSTEIN** in 3D; **THE MYSTERIOUS ISLAND OF CAPTAIN NEMO** stars Omar Sharif as Jules Verne's famous underwater recluse, Captain Nemo, of the pioneer submarine Nautilus, and Burroughs' monster dinosaur epic **THE LAND THAT TIME FORGOT** stars Doug McClure. The Burroughs movie was produced by Amicus Films and will be distributed by American-International.

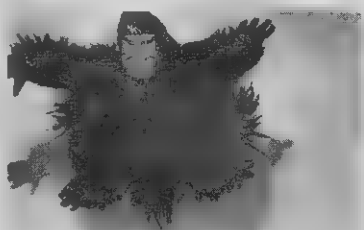
MONSTERS COMING YOUR WAY: **THE GHOUL**, starring Peter Cushing, Veronica Carlson and Gwen Watford, directed by Freddie Francis, written by John Elder, **THE CHOPPER**, starring Carolyn Brandt, Ron Haydock and Jason Wayne, produced and directed by Ray Dennis Steckler; **VAMPIRE'S ALL NIGHT ORGY**, starring Dianik Zurakowska; **THE BEAST MUST DIE**, with Calvin Lockhart; **IT'S ALIVE!**, with Andrew Duggan and Michael Ansara; **THE LEGEND OF BLOOD CAS-**



This is the styro-foam model of **The God-Monster**, designed by Fredrick Hobbs, built by McCloskey, prior to being covered with artificial skin and acrylic hair in the feature shot in Nevada.

TLE, starring Ewa Aulin; **WOTON'S WAKE**, a study in horror short-subject produced and directed by Brian de Palma; **SHRIEK OF THE MUTILATED**, starring Alan Brock; **THE LAST DAYS OF MAN ON EARTH**, starring Jon Finch and Patrick Magee; **ESCAPE TO WITCH MOUNTAIN**, with Ray Milland, Eddie Albert, Kim Richards and Donald Pleasance, and, believe it or not, **BAMBI MEETS GODZILLA!** (which is very short, very tragic and—oddly enough—very funny!).

NOW PLAYING THE WEREWOLF VS THE VAMPIRE WOMAN (Paul Nash, Gaby Fuchs, Barbara Catell), **TALES THAT WITNESS MADNESS** (Kim Novak, Joan Collins), **VAMPIRE CIRCUS** (John Moulder-Brown, Adrienne Corri), **ZARDOZ** (Sean Connery), **NIGHTMARE HONEYMOON** (Dack Rambo, Rebecca Smith), **I, MONSTER** (Peter Cushing, Christopher Lee), **NECROMANCY** (Bert I. Gordon), **FANTASTIC PLANET** (Roger Corman), **BEWARE! THE BLOB!** (Robert Walker Jr.), **TWINS OF EVIL** (Peter Cushing, Madeleine & Mary Collinson), **SUPERBEAST** (Antoinette Bower, Harry Lauter), and **THE DEVIL'S NIGHTMARE**.



Yes, it is Norbu, the Almost Human Gorilla, and his Entirely Female Assistant



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INSIDE



HAMMER FILMS

by Russ Jones



Some of the finest horror films in recent memory have come out of a small, independent studio based in Elstree, England. The studio is, of course, HAMMER FILMS and some of their finer productions include the CHRISTOPHER LEE/DRACULA series and the Frankenstein series, starring PETER CUSHING. During their heyday—in the early-to-mid sixties—one of Hammer's staff writers was RUSS JONES, a man with as varied a background as any writer could wish, having begun his career as a fencing and stunt choreographer for GEORGE SIDNEY, in the film, SCARAMOUCHE, before going on to script a number of TV shows (including episodes of CHEYENNE, BRONCO, HAWAIIAN EYE and BOURBON STREET BEAT). In between film scripts, he did free-lance writing for Marvel and the various other comics publishers; and, in the early sixties, he moved over to England and Hammer Films, where he worked until this year, when he came back to the States.

The idea of this piece is not to write a definitive article on Hammer Films. It is, in a way, a behind-the-scenes account of some of the experiences that I shared with the Hammer personnel during my decade association with that company.

Scene 1:

Background: In brief.

Shortly after the Second War War, Hammer Films was founded. Aside from Col. James Carreras, Will Hammer and Anthony Hinds (Will Hammer's son), it is difficult to find who the members of the original company were. But, when one thinks of Hammer, they are really thinking of James Carreras. Carreras, (now Sir James) is perhaps one of the most energetic salesman-businessman in the history of British cinema, as well as the guiding light behind the success of the product.

Hammer began production with a string of sixty minute programmes, most of which were spin-offs based on popular BBC television shows, such as DIAL 999 and DEPT. S.

It was with one of these BBC properties that Hammer had its first taste of real success, THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT, known in America as THE



Hammer star, *Peter Cushing*, playing a change-of-pace role—the Sheriff of Nottingham in the 1960 production, *SWORD OF SHERWOOD FOREST*, Hammer's first film to be shot on location in Ireland.



Director *Freddie Francis* (far left) runs through a rehearsal on the back lot of Bray Studios during the shooting of *EVIL OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1964)

CREEPING UNKNOWN.

In 1957 came a sequel, *QUATERMASS II*. Directed and co-written by *Val Guest*.

The giant for Hammer was in 1956, with the *CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN*. At first, the film was scheduled as a two week shoot. But, once on the floor, things changed: the script was rewritten, the shooting schedule pushed to six weeks (30 days), and *Terence Fisher* was placed in charge of directorial chores.

Fisher began in the industry as a film editor, and edited many of the famous Will Hay comedy films. He was placed under contract to the J. Arthur Rank Organization and directed many features for them, including: *PORTRAIT FROM LIFE* and *MARRY ME*. But it was the *CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* that gave him world-wide attention. It also began the legendary team of *Peter Cushing* and *Christopher Lee*.

What came to the audience's attention were the rich production values, and the expert use of color.

CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN was produced at Bray Studios for a budget of sixty thousand pounds. (About \$170,000 dollars.)

But the real magic happened in 1958. With virtually the same cast and crew, Hammer made *DRACULA*. That film, above all others, put the small company on the map. Hammer had found the formula.

DRACULA, or, *HORROR OF DRACULA*, (depending where you saw it), was shot in thirty days for a budget of less than one hundred thousand pounds.

The opulent sets were designed by *Bernard Robinson*. Robinson was a genius at revamping sets. It was his touch that gave the early films the authentic, moody atmosphere.

The main sound stage at Bray was used for the castle interiors. If one looks at the film closely, it is apparent that the library, as well as the main hall of the structure were the same set. It was simply redressed and painted. The exterior was on the back lot; the towers, sky and mountains were a painted, stationary matte. When *REVENGE OF FRANKENSTEIN* was filmed, the same sets were employed, wild walls moved, repainted and dressed. This saved the company the expense of rebuilding. *HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLE'S* was yet another revamp executed that year. In short, Hammer had the most overworked scene dock in England.

1959 also brought *THE MUMMY*. Robinson—having done his homework—created an authentic looking burial chamber.

Terry Fisher tells a rather amusing story about an incident that occurred during the *MUMMY'S* filming:

"The studio hired a noted Egyptologist to help on technical data. He was a very upright scientist, and very helpful. But, when the scroll was being read, to restore the mummy back to life, he turned to me and said that we didn't know what we were fooling with. He got up, left the set . . . and never came back. It gave me rather a turn. But everything was okay."



Roy Ashton, Hammer's Number-One makeup artist . . . very much the man behind the masks that many of Hammer's stars wore on screen.

The team of Fisher, Robinson, and *Jack Asher* (director of photography) worked like a well-oiled tool. Asher is now in the camera selling field. (It should be noted that he was nominated for an Academy Award for his lighting of *HORROR OF DRACULA*.)

HORROR OF DRACULA, was an important film in more than one respect. Christopher Lee, a very competent actor, had gone through some very lean times. He had played minor roles in many films since 1947, but through Hammer he became a star. Lee had his own ideas about *DRACULA*, and was very pleased with the first Hammer version. He was slated to play the character again in 1961, but declined. In 1965, though, *DRACULA, PRINCE OF DARKNESS*, went before the cameras at Bray and Lee did the role once more.

PRINCE OF DARKNESS, although sporting a fine cast and Terence Fisher once again directing, met with a bit of disapproval from the fans, Hammer's greatest critics. One fault they found was that Dracula did not speak, but was brought back from the dead as a gaunt embodiment of evil.

Lee also played *RASPUTIN, THE MAD MONK*, right on the heels of Dracula. In *RASPUTIN* very little revamping was done, and though the films were released several months apart, even an untrained eye could recognize the sameness. One way the studio saved some money was on sets.

In the early 60's, Lee moved from London to Switzerland. During a period of almost two years he made no films for Hammer, or for that matter in England. Most of his activity was on the continent. He returned to England in 1964.

Lee is as interesting off-screen as he is on. He is a very

well read man, a singer and an excellent swordsman. He is professional all the way, but has always taken the time to write to his fans, and to answer many questions that they have asked. This is rare indeed, knowing what the man's schedule is. Fame has not changed Christopher Lee.

The first Hammer production of *DRACULA* brought Peter Cushing back in the role of Van Helsing, vampire killer, rather than the icy-eyed Baron Frankenstein. He and Lee made a team that could not be matched. The two, for some reason that can't be put into words, play very well off each other, and keep the film (films) moving.

Scene 2:

Bray Studios is located at Windsor, Berkshire, about thirty miles or so from London and the front office in Wardour Street. Wardour Street contains the offices of most of the British film companies. Tony Hinds once commented that it was the only street in London that was shady on both sides. (Joking, of course.) It was at these studios where the films were really planned out.

Bray is right off the Thames. In its infancy, the company had done its shooting in the manor house that was on the property. The building not only served as a sound stage, but as makeup department, commissary, publicity, and just about everything else a good studio should have.

Things changed as production became accelerated. Hammer reinvested their monies in Bray. Before long they had four small—but adequate—stages. (The largest burned shortly after the completion of *BRIDES OF DRACULA*.) The reason for the small stages being that—because the zoning laws in that regions are very diffi-

cult—the stages could only be a certain height, as tourists travel the Thames and a film studio would be considered an eyesore.

Most of my time was spent with producers and directors, and mostly with *Tony Nelson Keys* and *Terry Fisher*. But Bray Studios itself has always held a fascination for me. In 1970 I paid my last visit there. At that time *Don Weeks* was studio manager. Several years before, Hammer had moved to Elstree and now Bray, with all its memories, was used as a rental.

Ken Russell was on the lot at the time, but in post production, and the massive Russian sets that had been used in *THE MUSIC LOVERS*, had just been struck.

Actually, I had gone out to the studios to buy up whatever sets and props were left. I'm glad I did; for several months later Bray Studios was sold.

Scene 3:

In 1961 plans were made to produce *THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF*, as part of a multi-picture deal that James Carreras had made with Universal Pictures. The property was based on *Guy Endore's THE WEREWOLF OF PARIS*. There is very little of the book in the film adaptation, as the book dealt with the plague in Paris, a werewolf named Bertrand, politics, etc.; and the budget—if filmed definitively—would have been two million dollars.

Changes were made.

At that time, the back lot of the studio looked like an island in the Pacific, as Hammer had just made a World War II POW film. With a lot of revamping and rewriting, the story was moved from France to Spain.

Roy Ashton, the number one make-up artist at Hammer came up with probably the most convincing werewolf ever put on film. Ashton would make dozens of sketches as well as clay models before he even knew who the actor he would be transforming would be. In this case, as most readers will know, he was *Oliver Reed*.

Terry Fisher was called on to direct. The picture was shot on the usual thirty day schedule.

Hammer ran into a few problems with the British Board of Film Censors on *WEREWOLF*. In England the picture was rated X, (as were most of Hammer's productions), and the whole sequence of the mute girl being thrown into the dungeon with the beggar, the implied rape scene, and the subsequent killing of the evil, rotting Marquis ended up on the cutting room floor. So, the audience had no idea what really happened.

In 1970, a group of us went to see the cut version of *WEREWOLF* at a local cinema. (In England, films never really go out of distribution, they'll play the circuits as long as there is interest.) The strange thing is that the following week the movie was shown on BBC Television. And it was shown *uncut*. You see, there is no censorship on British television, and the film was even shown on a Saturday afternoon.

One of the films made during this period remains my personal favorite to this day: *CAPTAIN CLEGG*. (In American it was titled *NIGHT CREATURES*.)

Producer *John Temple Smith* brought the property to Hammer. It was based on the adventure novel *DR. SYN*, written by *Russell Thorndike*, brother of the famous Dame Sybil.

There was a snag. Walt Disney Productions at just about the same time began filming *DR. SYN*, *ALIAS THE SCARECROW*. So, the name *DR. SYN* could



Character actor *Michael Ripper* has been seen in nearly every Hammer production to date.

rest of Thorndike's characters remain unchanged. It was rumored that in the States, the Disney organization had produced a *DR. SYN* book and placed it under their copyright. Hammer played it safe.

Peter Graham Scott directed, and *Arthur Grant* was director of photography.

Arthur did a lot of pre-production shooting to achieve the desired effects for the night riders of Romney Marsh.

A lot of the filming of the riders was shot night-for-night, something most producers would like to live without. The usual procedure is day-for-night, which means filming during the day with filters. Arthur always had to try and keep the cameras away from the skyline, to avoid seeing fleecy, white clouds at what was supposed to be midnight.

Peter Cushing played the kindly Dr. Bliss, vicar of Dymchurch, who in reality is the pirate, Clegg, and leader of the revenue runners, smuggling brandy across the channel from France to England in defiance of the tax laws. *Oliver Reed* appeared as the "romantic lead." *Michael Ripper* played Mr. Mipps, ship's carpenter to Clegg, now sexton/man-of-all-work for Dr. Bliss. *Patrick Allen* played the revenue officer, Captain Faunce, leader of the dragoons.

NIGHT CREATURES was released in America on a double-bill with *PHANTOM OF THE OPERA*. To this day, nobody is really quite sure where that film went wrong. It was a very ambitious project, and the most expensive film Hammer had produced at that time. But it just didn't make it.

Scene 4:

EVIL OF FRANKENSTEIN was not meant to follow its forerunners as a sequel; this was Universal's idea since the film was being made for them. When *EVIL* appeared on national television in the States—along with *PHANTOM OF THE OPERA* and *KISS*

OF THE VAMPIRE (title for TV was KISS OF EVIL)—the networks needed additional running time. Footage from the original films was cut, and new footage, shot in California, was added to fill the required two hour time slot. The results—to say the least—were confusing. Subplots were added. In EVIL OF FRANKENSTEIN, a flashback was shot, telling how the mute girl became mute. In PHANTOM the antics of two Scotland Yard detectives was spliced in. In KISS OF THE VAMPIRE a dragged-out bit of rubbish was thrown in: it showed a married couple, whose young daughter wants to visit the castle; the father is furious as is the girl's boyfriend. The mother just sits in the background sewing white costumes . . . to be delivered to . . . guess where? Since none of the people in the sub-plots ever run into anyone in the original version, their appearance in the film meant nothing. Nothing that is, except to add additional running time.

Scene 5:

Production at Bray increased. Carreras made a multi-picture deal with Columbia, followed by yet another with 20th Century-Fox.

Columbia did a fair job of distribution, Fox doing equally well with ONE MILLION YEARS B.C. as it boasted one of their contract players, *Raquel Welch*. THE DEVIL RIDES OUT, on the other hand—one of Hammer's best films in years—got very little play. The same was true for THE DEVIL'S OWN, and THE MUMMY'S SHROUD. With the latter completed, Hammer picked up and moved to Associated British Studios at Elstree.

They had used the Elstree Studios in the past on productions such as SHE, ONE MILLION YEARS B.C., and PREHISTORIC WOMEN. A.B.P. had money invested in the U.K. rights of the Hammer films and wanted them under their roof. Tony Nelson Keys was made studio manager at Bray but the studio went dark; some work was done there, but no active

production. *Ray Harryhausen* worked out of Bray doing his animation for ONE MILLION YEARS B.C., as did *Jim Danforth* on his project, WHEN DINOSAURS RULED THE EARTH.

Hammer filmed one picture at Pinewood Studios. That was DRACULA HAS RISEN FROM THE GRAVE. I personally thought that the lack of Bernard Robinson's skilled art direction was evident. The film was directed by *Freddie Francis*. (Freddie is an Academy Award winner. For many years he was a director of photography, and he received his Oscar for the lighting of SONS AND LOVERS. He also photographed MOBY DICK. He turned to directing in 1961.)

With Hammer now under the wing of Associated British Productions (A.B.P.), something changed. It is really hard to say just what, but it did. The "old standbys" started thinning out, one-by-one. The old magic was gone.

But a whole new generation of viewers was there; in fact, business was never better. In 1968 Hammer was given the Queen's Award To The Industry, for export, and in 1970 James Carreras became Sir James.

In 1971, though, Sir James began a slow departure from the company, his son, Michael being given a company directorship. Michael had produced many films under the Hammer banner, but had left the company to produce on his own; now he was back.

Roy Skeggs was moved from his office in Wardour Street to Elstree to take charge of production. With Skeggs was *Chris Neame*, son of director *Ronald Neame*.

But 1971 was a turning point. The British film industry had slowed down. Rumours spread that many studios would be closing their doors, like the massive MGM studios at Elstree, where films such as 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY had been made.

Someone at Hammer must have gotten the word, as the company started to produce small budget films for the domestic market, with very few going to export. And today, in 1974, the lack of product from Hammer in

Yet another view of an old favorite, *Peter Cushing*. This time starring as the Reverend Dr. Bliss in the 1961 film, CAPTAIN CLEGG.



America is apparent, though it is rumoured that production will be back in full swing at any time.

Making films is a serious business . . . particularly if the budget is not a huge one. More work goes into some low budget pictures *because* of the lack of money. Hammer always wanted to put the money on the screen, rather than blow it on expensive locations or major stars. But small budget films are tough. The director does not have time to fool around with artsy set-ups or a lot of rehearsal time. Terence Fisher had always thought that some of the films suffered a bit because of tight shooting schedules.

Another director, *Peter Sasdy*, had a similar problem while shooting *TASTE THE BLOOD OF DRACULA*. Sasdy had been a television director for many years, and *TASTE THE BLOOD OF DRACULA* was his first feature film.

The unit was shooting at Old Brompton Cemetery, where legend has it that a real vampire stalks the night. Early in the afternoon a strange thing happened. The sun *vanished* . . . it was like an eclipse. Arthur Grant (director of photography) could not get a light reading, and a hush came over both cast and crew. Christopher Lee was back in the dark catacombs of the cemetery and refused to move. *Rod Barron*, who was passing out tea to the crew, refused to go back to Lee, afraid that he would walk into Count Dracula—as Lee was wearing the full Dracula make-up. Old Brompton Cemetery looks bad enough in the daylight, but with no light, I can't say that I blame either one for not wanting to venture about. Within forty minutes, though,

the light was back and the day's shooting continued.

Hammer did very little location work over the years. The back lot at the studios was used for just about everything. It was handy, because if the weather changed, a cover set was but a few yards away. When they did go on location, Black Park in Buckinghamshire was used. When Hammer moved to Elstree, Scratch Wood became the number one spot for exterior shooting, as it was only about fifteen minutes from the studio. One could always see from the motorway where Hammer was filming, as white signs were posted bearing the word 'Hammer' in dripping red letters. But they were only invaded by fans once—at Scratch Wood—when a group of Boy Scouts were amazed to run smack into Count Dracula.

Scene 6:

Now the studios are quiet. One hopes that the tide will change and production will again be active.

But for me things will never be quite the same again. In early 1970, Bernard Robinson died as the result of a heart attack. A noted authority on antiques, Robinson was finishing a book on the subject. It was completed by his wife, *Margaret*, and *Ken Ryan*, Robinson's assistant.

In 1971 death claimed Arthur Grant. Arthur was one of my best friends in the industry. He will be remembered by the fine work he did on many of the Hammer films, such as *CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF*, *TASTE THE BLOOD OF DRACULA* and *BLOOD FROM THE MUMMY'S TOMB*.

1973 claimed Anthony Nelson Keys. Tony was one of



Not quite the Magnificent Seven, but who's counting. From left to right: writer/producer *Russ Jones*, actor *David Oxley*, actor *Rhodes Reason*, Mr. Reason's stand-in, *Frank Mayher*; and assistant art director (to Hammer Art Director *Bernie Robinson*) *Ken Ryan*, taken in 1959 at Bray Studios.



THE SIGN OF QUALITY

HAMMER

the best producers that Hammer had. He met Michael Carreras in 1966 and joined them first as an Associate Producer, Producer then General Manager at Bray Studios.

Born in London, Tony Keys entered the film industry as a clapper boy and after working as an assistant director, he joined *Sidney Box* as a Production Manager and later became Associate Producer with *Daniel Angel*.

But the name Anthony Nelson Keys will always be remembered by those who enjoyed the films he produced for Hammer, of which there are many.

No matter what is to come in the film industry, though, one can be assured that there will always be a Hammer Films, and rather than look behind and despair, we should keep our eyes ahead . . . for no one knows what lurks just around the corner. . . .

Just remember, Dracula has died before . . . and been reborn.

Why not Hammer Films?



The most famous vampire of them all: *Dracula*! (Here shown in an exclusive, previously-unpublished photograph from Hammer's 1959 masterpiece, *HORROR OF DRACULA*).

The Making of

A science fiction picture about a gigantic ball of living monster, a frozen dead man who commands a spaceship, a super-atomic bomb that argues with a crew of madmen—those are some of the ingredients of the new film, *Dark Star*. The man responsible for some of the film's most sensational special effects tells us all about it.

by Bob Greenberg

In the 21st Century, the people of the planet Earth have begun to set up colonies on all the reachable planets of the Universe. The colonists' greatest danger is from stars that are unstable, due to explode, taking their planets with them. The Men of the Advance Exploration Corps fly a lonely mission, seeking out the Unstable Stars and blowing them up with Exponential Thermostellar Bombs.

The crew of the scoutship *Dark Star* is one such group of men, composed of Doolittle, Talby, Pinback and Boiler. Modern medical techniques have rendered them virtually ageless, but the isolation has taken its toll. They are unshaven, unwashed, and somewhat insane from their twenty years in space.

The crew's own breakdown is so acute, they hardly seem to notice that the ship itself is starting to malfunction badly. The worst failure is with the bomb bay that drops the Thermostellar Bombs. Each Bomb has a sophisticated electronic brain whose high in-

telligence makes it virtually human. *Dark Star's* Bomb, it seems, is willing and eager to explode, even at peril to the ship.

As if this was not enough trouble, the ship's pet monster—a gigantic ball of protoplasm captured on an alien world—gets out of hand and endangers Sergeant Pinback.

Their problems get so great, that the crew is forced to consult their former Commanding Officer, Commander Powell. Powell is dead, his body in a freezer compartment, but he can be returned to a semblance of life long enough to help them make decisions. But can even the commander tell them what to do about a Bomb determined to explode, even if its detonation means the destruction of the *Dark Star*?

“WELL, you see, there are these four astronauts. They've been in space for twenty years—and they're all nuts. You know what I mean?” I was trying

"DARK STAR"

DARK
STAR

for the fiftieth time to explain what *DARK STAR* is about. And failing again.

I had worked on *DARK STAR*. I had poured some of my blood into *DARK STAR*. I've seen a dozen different versions of the film and I love it to pieces. And I still have a hell of a time explaining what it's all about. How did Stanley Kubrick explain 2001?

One thing I can tell you is that people are going crazy over it. Not everybody, of course. But a lot of people whose opinions matter to me.

I guess I should tell you where this picture came from.

One night in 1972, I went to a screening of several short films in a package from Genesis Films. One of the pictures—a gripping study in terror by Terry Winkless entitled *JUDSON'S RELEASE*—featured a drooling, dripping maniac killer. I looked, and looked, and said, "Why—I know that drooling, dripping maniac killer! I went to school with him. That drooling, dripping maniac killer is my old friend, Dan O'Bannon."

I hadn't seen O'Bannon in eight years, so it took some doing to track him down. And when I found him, he was carrying a reel of film under his arm which proved to be the first sequences of *DARK STAR*.

At this time, Dan was still trying to wiggle out of the University of Southern California with some kind of

degree, as was John Carpenter, his partner on *DARK STAR*. The film was their school project. The footage which I saw at that time was intended to be fleshed out with special effects to a length of forty minutes. I offered to do a few effects, curious about the project and anxious to contribute to what looked to be a really fine picture.

The graphic materials looked fine, even at that stage. O'Bannon had really done his homework, and with the cheapest materials had made beautiful, impressive sets and costumes, with excellent use of color and light. The photography by Doug Knapp was excellent. And the few qualms I had about some of the dramatics grew dimmer as time went on.

The picture was really a two-man operation. Dan and John had co-authored the script. John also drummed up the bulk of the money, directed the film, and even wrote the superb musical score. Dan not only designed and supervised all graphic materials, including special effects, but he starred in the film, giving a performance which one reviewer found Academy Award worthy.

After the initial screening, Dan and I had much to talk about. The dramatic materials were there, but the exterior of the ship had not been designed, and no effects had been shot. Painter-cartoonist Ron Cobb came to the rescue with an attractive design for the ship and

model builder *Greg Jein* turned it into a reality.

Dan asked me to shoot a variety of scenes for the picture, utilizing the facilities of the California Institute of the Arts, where I was enrolled as a student and teaching assistant. Cal Arts had an Oxberry animation stand, the Rolls-Royce of animation equipment, and I was fairly adept in using it. Under Dan's supervision, and utilizing his very exact drawings of the scenes to be shot, I cranked out what proved to be somewhere between five and ten minutes of the finished picture's final running time of 83 minutes.

And the stuff is good, even if I do say so myself. But I didn't do it all, and I should give credit where credit is due. All of the computer read-outs and the electrical storm and laser sequences were done by *John Walsh*. And the final optical work, including the matting in of the stars, and the dressing up of many sequences, was superbly executed by a modest genius, *Bill Taylor*, who also contributed lyrics to a country-western song used in the film. Ah, these Renaissance Men!!!

Well, kiddies, it's time for show and tell. This is Uncle Bob's Behind-the-Scenes-Tour. I'm going to attempt to explain how to make a space ship fly, a planet explode, and an asteroid glow, with no money to spend.

The first thing was to get that ship that Greg Jein built to race around through space and look like it was moving fast. Most of these shots (and there are a lot of them) were done right on the animation stand. The problem was to have the ship start very large in the frame and speed off to a planet hovering in the distant background. Materials required—two transparencies in blazing color—one of the ship and one of the planet. Each is photographed separately on the same piece of film—a double exposure. First, the planet is positioned over a back-lit area on the table, under the animation camera. (I prefer back lighting because it gives the artwork a real glow that it might otherwise not have and so that the black areas around the art can be really black. No light reaches that camera except what I intend.)

I set the frame counter to 0000, and compute the number of frames to a ten second shot—240 (it sounds like a lot, and believe me, it is!). Then I shoot 240 frames of the planet sitting in position in the upper left hand corner of the frame, pretty as you please. Phase one complete.

Now I cover the lens to prevent exposing the film, and roll back the film from 0240 to 0000, which is where I started. Time to have that space ship move toward the planet. Did I say move? Yes, move. Well, there's no way to move the photograph of the ship itself so I have to move the camera instead. I start the camera very close to the transparency of the ship, so that it is very large in the frame, and I raise the camera, so that the ship seems to recede from it.

When the film is processed, what the audience will see is that planet just sitting there in the background, with the ship moving toward it. And, as with every effect in the film, the scene is shot with many variations of speed and color density, to be able to choose the most effective scene.

I hope that's clear. Explaining visual materials on paper is a difficult task at best.

All of the other effects are done in like manner. Each element in the scene is photographed in a separate pass through the camera. They are all photographed onto the same piece of film, rather than each element being shot on a different piece. This maintains the quality of the



An interstellar electrical storm engulfs the Dark Star

Commander Powell (Joe Saunders) hovers in a block of ice, wired to the power source which keeps him alive.



image, because nothing breaks down in the filmmaking process faster than the film itself. Every time you go from one piece of film to another, you lose quality.

Actually, there are three types of visual effects. The first is the mechanical effect. Things are put in front of the camera and photographed. This includes all miniatures, explosions, automobiles going over the cliff, etc. The second category is optical effects. These are created by combining or changing images which have already been photographed.

The third category is my specialty—animated effects. Flat images are manipulated frame by frame to give the effect of a live image. For example, I'll describe a method of blowing up a space ship or a planet under the



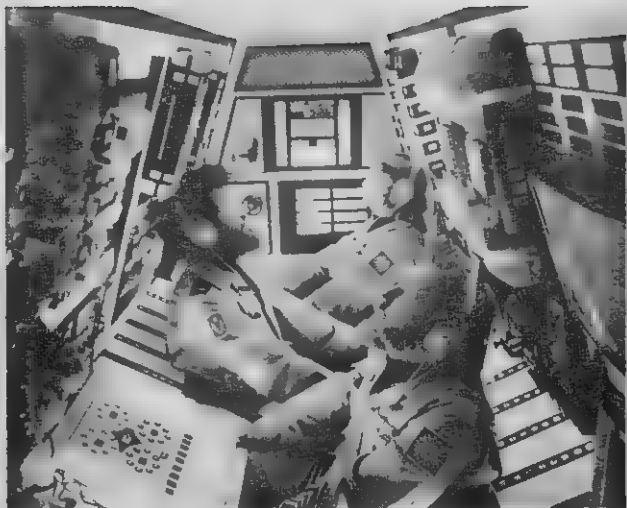
animation camera. I created several explosions for *DARK STAR* in just this manner.

All that is really photographed is a small hole in a piece of black paper. The paper is placed under the camera, and back-lit. All you see, looking at the animation table, is a white dot. It may be any size from $\frac{1}{4}$ inch to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch in diameter. The lens on the camera is put out of focus, which gives the circle of light a soft edge. Then three frames of film are exposed. First the hole is very small in the frame. In the next frame it is larger, and in the next very large. This can vary, to make the explosion smaller or larger, or longer or shorter. What I have described is a quick flash, which is very impressive as the explosion of a distant planet. When the film is edited, you simply cut from a shot of a planet, to the explosion, to black space, giving the effect that the planet has blown up and disappeared. Cost—nothing.

You can dress up this effect, too. I used the same method to create the explosion of the starship. In the same shot was the surface of the planet, the ship hovering above. When I did the exposure of the planet, I over-exposed a few frames here and there, to give the impression that the planet was lit up by the brightness of the explosion.

A sequence in the film which has created some interest is the scene of hyperdrive, in which the ship whizzes through space at such a dizzying speed that the star seem to rush past in a multicolored tunnel of light, similar in effect to the star-gate sequence from *2001*.

The problem here was not to get the stars moving toward the camera. All I had to do was move the camera toward the stars. But the effect of incredible speed was



The crew of the Dark Star braces for the force field which grips the ship during hyperdrive.



Sergeant Pinback (Dan O'Bannon) fights an outer space monster which attempts to lure him to his death.

tough. What I did was to place a piece of black paper on the table, with holes punched in it for stars. I then set the camera to expose each frame for one full second. As any photographer knows, a long exposure will cause any movement in front of the camera to blur. This principle can be put to good use, and is the basis of the slit scan mechanism used in *2001*. But slit scans cost money, so I had to substitute ingenuity. At any rate, the one second exposures, made while the camera was moving toward the artwork, caused each star to leave a trail like a comet behind it. Very effective, to say the least. A few colored filters, and I had a dazzling scene for the picture.

Now you should have some idea about the techniques used to create animated effects for *DARK STAR*, as well as *2001*, *SILENT RUNNING*, and many other films. I hope that you'll see this one when it plays. We think it's pretty great.

If you want to see action, adventure, monsters, outer-space mind boggling spectacle, and four lovable astronauts who have flipped their lids, we'll see you at the movies!

“WHAT’S UP, DOC

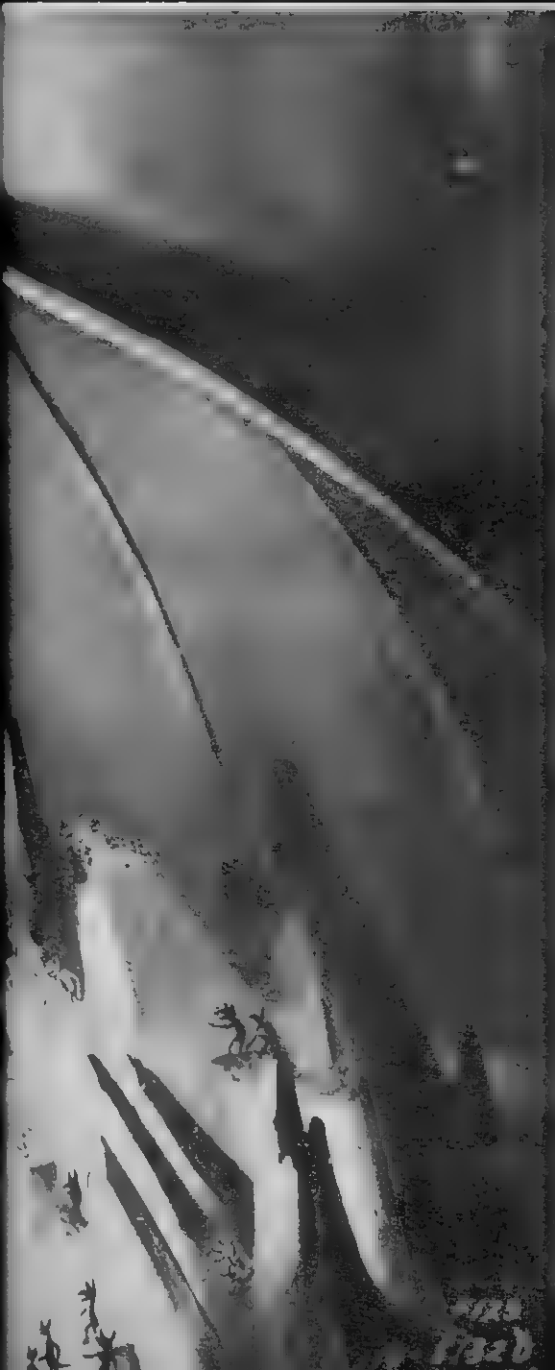
One of the first monsters of the movies was in animated form, and since then, there have been thousands of other relatives of King Kong, Frankenstein, Godzilla, and the Wolf Man in cartoons, both comic and creepy.



Walt Disney Productions

FRANKENSTEIN?"

You'll learn about them here—and Don Glut will especially highlight the genius of one great animator—Bob Clampett.



by Don Glut

Count Dracula visited the Walt Disney studios in 1940 to contribute to the production of that masterpiece of cartoon animation, the feature-length film *FANTASIA*. This was the Count's second stint as a Disney employee, the first being as an animated cartoon character along with Frankenstein's Monster and Quasimodo in *MICKEY'S GALA PREMIERE* (1933), which starred the studio's favorite Mouse. But in *FANTASIA*, Dracula was not to appear an animated character. He had been hired to *act* before the live action cameras to provide the inevitable movements of yet another cartoon figure.

Perhaps I've been a bit misleading. It wasn't *really* Count Dracula who worked on *Fantasia*, but rather the actor whose name is virtually synonymous with that of the Vampire King—*Bela Lugosi*. The Hungarian actor was chosen by Disney to emote with broad gestures and expressions (as he had in the role of Dracula) as a model for the fabulous demon of Bald Mountain in one of the segments of *FANTASIA*. The film presented visual interpretations of great and familiar pieces of classical music, a perfect harmony of sight and sound; one of the most memorable segments of the film was the one for which Lugosi performed, Mussorgsky's "Night on Bald Mountain."

By a process called "rotoscope," the Disney artists traced over the images of Lugosi enacting his theatrical, Dracula-like actions, and transformed him into the horrifying demon of Bald Mountain. First glimpsed as a part of the mountain peak itself, the demon slowly opens its bat-like wings, stretches its sinewy limbs in the black night, then threatens a small town in the valley below with an assortment of vampires, werewolves and other supernatural horrors. Only the first lights of dawn compel the demon to shield itself with its wings and return to a state of dormancy. "Night on Bald Mountain," with its supremely powerful demon performing in accordance with the forceful strains of Mussorgsky's music, remains one of the classic sequences terror on the screen.

"The Rite of Spring," another episode of *FANTASIA*, traversed time to present the Earth as it was (or as Disney's writers would have us believe) before the dawn of Man. We see life originating in the sea, microscopic organisms dividing and growing, until the earth eventually becomes populated by the great reptiles of the Mesozoic Era—and all to the music of Stravinsky, suggesting a raw and primitive world. Scientifically speaking, this prehistoric episode of *FANTASIA* is replete with errors. Many of the antediluvian denizens depicted in the film never coexisted; the lumbering Stegosaurus is much too large; and Tyrannosaurus, which lived millions of years after the last Stegosaurus perished, had but two claws on each dangling hand and was more likely a scavenger than the mighty hunter Disney's artists showed

him to be. These errors seem even more glaring in the short version of "The Rite of Spring" entitled *A WORLD IS BORN*, complete with documentary-style narration. But to the film buff these points are overshadowed and obliterated by the sheer magnificence of the film itself, so all that matters is the life-and-death conflict between these wondrous creatures and their inexorable and tragic extinction.

The very first animated cartoon character of consequence was a monster—and, like the creatures in "The Rite of Spring"—a prehistoric monster. *GERTIE THE DINOSAUR* was the creation of *Winsor McCay* (most famous for his *Little Nemo* newspaper strip). The silent cartoon was made in 1909 and opened with live action of McCay arguing with a group of friends (one being newspaper cartoonist George McManus) that he could, in fact, present a living dinosaur on the screen through a series of slightly different drawings photographed in sequence. Gertie herself was the result. She was an amiable *Brontosaurus*, the progenitor of all

WORLD brought the might one into conflict with a lost race of bird-men. And in *THE MUMMY STRIKES* the hero from Krypton did not plunge into battle with one mere man-sized undead Egyptian—but a whole horde of them, each one the size of *Mighty Joe Young*!

There have been many screen adaptations of Edgar Allan Poe's classic short story, *The Tell-Tale Heart*. Strangely enough, the most authentic adaptation on film (and the most terrifying) is a cartoon short made in 1954 by UPA. It was also the only version of the tale made in three-dimension technique. *James Mason* narrated the story of a man killing another man because of the latter's haunting, vulture-like, pale blue eye. Through some unnerving surrealistic graphics and Mason's chilling narration, the viewer actually knows the terror experienced by the story's protagonist, as he hears the tell-tale beating of his dead victim's heart. The animated *Tell-Tale Heart* remains an authentic excursion in terror through a demented mind.



These are pre-production drawings by Bob Clampett for his series, *The Monster Family*, an animated series that anticipated the live-action *MUNSTERS* of a few years later. © Bob Clampett

anthropomorphic cartoon animals to follow. McCay would step onto a stage and prompt the supposedly trained Gertie to do her tricks. Then (by cleverly ducking behind a curtain) he would appear on the screen and ride off on Gertie's back. *GERTIE THE DINOSAUR* was a sensation, so popular, in fact, that McCay made a sequel, *GERTIE ON TOUR* in 1917, while *John Bray* made his own similar version of *GERTIE THE DINOSAUR* in approximately 1910.

Serious cartoons are possibly more a part of the world of horror films and monsters than most film buffs actually realize. The set of seventeen *Superman* cartoons, made in color by Paramount from 1941 through '43, are generally regarded as simply expertly-made short subjects depicting the superheroic exploits of the Man of Steel. But *Superman* tangled with as many monsters as he did gangsters in this excellent series. In *THE ARCTIC GIANT* the Man of Tomorrow battled an enormous, Godilla-like reptile, while in *THE MECHANICAL MONSTERS* he was nearly defeated by an army of super-deadly robots. *UNDERWORLD*

Unfortunately one of the most promising (and, at the time, innovative) of the serious cartoons died aborning. *Bob Clampett*, a writer/artist/director/animator at the Warner Brothers cartoon department during the 1930's and 40's, was enlisted by *Tarzan* author *Edgar Rice Burroughs* to create an entire series of animated color shorts, based on his famed science fiction hero, *John Carter of Mars*. The year was 1935, half a decade before the first of the *Paramount Superman* cartoons. The *John Carter* cartoons, then, could have been the first animated shorts to deal with monsters and science fiction, and to depict an adventure hero with realistic animation.

For the actions of *Carter* himself, Clampett used the rotoscope process, thereby following the movements of an athlete who performed all the leaping and swinging of the Earthman who is transported to the planet Mars. Clampett designed realistic versions of the *Tharks*, the green men of *Barsoom* (the Martian name for their own planet), and the 8-legged *thoats*, which the *Barsoomians* used for transportation. There were scenes



Yes, it's a Thark riding a thoat on the planet Barsoom. This fanged green man and his eight-legged steed of the Martian desert were created by Bob Clampett in 1935, for his version of Edgar Rice Burroughs' *John Carter of Mars*. © Bob Clampett

of Carter leaping about the great Martian futuristic cities, unfettered by gravity, and shots of great fleets of rocketships blasting out of the crater of a volcano.

What happened to this proposed John Carter Series?

"The cartoons were to be released by MGM," Bob Clampett told this writer. "The MGM sales heads in Hollywood and New York were very excited over the idea. But the reaction from most of the exhibitors across the country, especially in the smaller towns, was negative. They said that the concept of an Earthman on Mars was entirely too far-fetched for their 'Corn Belt' and 'Bible Belt' audiences.

"It's ironic," Clampett mused, "that the first FLASH GORDON serial was released in late 1936 by Universal and did fantastic business. Maybe MGM felt that serials played only to children at Saturday matinees, while the John Carter color cartoons would be seen by adult audiences in the evenings. At any rate, MGM decided against going ahead with JOHN CARTER OF MARS and suggested instead that I do an animated series called TARZAN AND HIS ANIMALS—with the animals performing the kind of gags I was then writing for the Warner cartoons! A really awful premise. I would have done the best I could with it, but Warner Brothers made me a much better offer to stay with them. I gladly accepted."

For long years the ill-fated John Carter test footage, drawn and animated by Bob Clampett, was believed to be lost. Fortunately, however, Danton Burroughs, the grandson of John Carter's creator, recently located some of the rare film in the storage vaults at ERB, Inc. in Tarzana, California. This writer has seen the footage and can attest that a real loss has been suffered by the squelching of the series. The sight of the Martian riding the thoat, with those perfectly coordinated eight legs in full gallop, is magnificent to behold. It's such

a pity that the short-sighted exhibitors of 1936 deprived us of such fantastic adventure!

Warner Brothers, the studio responsible for the funniest cartoons ever made (with such animated superstars as Bugs Bunny, Porky, Tweety, Sylvester and the Road Runner) was a potent force in keeping such classic horrors as *Frankenstein's Monster* and *Mr. Hyde* before the eyes of the public. Among the two or three greatest of all the Warner animators and cartoon directors (it is impossible to single out any one of them as "best") was Bob Clampett, who was responsible for many of that studio's most memorable cartoons.



What big ears you have, Frankenstein Monster—and the feet ain't tiny, either. Only Bob Clampett—not even Boris Karloff—could turn Bugs Bunny into a Frankenstein creature.

© Warner Bros., courtesy of Bob Clampett.



These dinosaurs are not off to do battle with King Kong, but to meet their tragic destiny in the workings of the universe.
From *Fantasia*. © Walt Disney Productions.

Bob's association with monsters at the Warner studios can be traced back to 1932 with the *Harmon-Ising* cartoon *THREE'S A CROWD*, in which he drew one of the most famous classic horror scenes of all. (It was Bob Clampett who invented the story formula of bringing advertising signs to life in an earlier "Merrie Melodie." In *THREE'S A CROWD* the idea was applied to book covers to show *Fredric March's* Dr. Jekyll spring to life from the cover of Stevenson's novel and then transform into the ugly Mr. Hyde.

This same technique was applied the next year to *I LIKE MOUNTAIN MUSIC*, a cartoon which brought magazine covers to life, and for which Bob originated the giant gorilla Ping Pong. And years later, Ping Pong would live again; though in a different medium and in a concept that had its origins when Bob was still a child.

In 1925, *THE LOST WORLD* premiered and young Bob Clampett, somewhat of a dinosaur buff, went to see the seemingly living prehistoric beasts cavort upon the screen. The scenes of the Brontosaurus creating havoc in London and then swimming back toward its anachronistic world inspired Bob to fashion his own humorous sea serpent. Traces of Bob's original conception are evident in many of his Warner cartoons. But the idea reached full-blown fruition after Bob left the Warner studio in the late 1940s and pioneered early TV with his revered puppet show, *TIME FOR BEANY*, which later became an animated cartoon series called

BEANY AND CECIL. (Remember that ending tune, sung by Cecil the Seaside Sea Serpent? "A Bob Clampett cartoo-ooon!") Cecil was the end product of Bob's *LOST WORLD* inspiration. His first TV show, *TIME FOR BEANY*, also became the home for Ping Pong. The giant ape was now in the incarnation of an actor wearing a gorilla costume and aided by a live chimpanzee. In one spectacular *TIME FOR BEANY* serial, Ping Pong helped Beany, Cecil and their friends ward off an invasion of unidentified flying objects. Not surprisingly, Bob incorporated scenes of a fleet of flying saucers shooting out of a volcano crater and attacking the city, creating one of the first real spectacles on live television. Ping Pong was later featured on the *BEANY AND CECIL* cartoon series.

In 1933, Bob Clampett was one of the gag-writers of *BOSKO'S MECHANICAL MAN* and *WAKE UP THE GYPSY IN ME*. In the former, Bosko builds a robot out of junk and brings it to life with a car motor. When the mechanical thing begins to move, Bosko shouts, "Frankenstein!" *WAKE UP THE GYPSY IN ME* spoofed the 1932 MGM film *RASPUTIN AND THE EMPRESS* by featuring the sinister character Rice Puddin'.

Bob's *LOST WORLD* influence was apparent in the 1936 cartoon, *BUDDY'S LOST WORLD*. Buddy sails to a prehistoric island where the "tree trunks" he walks beneath are really the legs of a mammoth Brontosaurus. The dinosaur gives Buddy a wet "slurp kiss," a gag

that would eventually become a part of Cecil's personality. In 1939, Bob again brought dinosaurs to life, along with a nasty, pitch black sabre-tooth cat, in the cartoon PREHISTORIC PORKY.

The monsters were only beginning to run rampant in Bob's Warner cartoons. Porky Pig tackled and defeated the gorgon Medusa in PORKY'S HERO AGENCY (1937) and met both the Invisible Man and a cowardly Frankenstein Monster in PORKY'S MOVIE MYSTERY (1939). In HOLLYWOOD STEPS OUT (1941), a cartoon which Bob helped gag, the Frankenstein Monster did a conga dance. Bugs Bunny mimicked the Frankenstein Monster in the Clampett-directed WHAT'S COOKIN', DOC? (1944) and in his Daffy Duck cartoon, THE GREAT PIGGYBANK ROBBERY (1946), Bob spoofed Dick Tracy with Daffy as "Duck Twacy," and such monstrous villains as "Wolf Man," "Bat Man" and "Neon Noodle," a living neon sign in the shape of Frankenstein's creation.

An interesting fact is that Bob Clampett, from 1943 to '45, had been developing a live-action comedy series idea for early TV. The project was THE MONSTER FAMILY, consisting of the Frankensteinian father, Frankie Monster, his vampiric wife and their monstrous son. As far as Frankie and family were concerned, they were just plain folks. Frankie could never quite grasp why other people did doubletakes or fainted when he and his brood lumbered by. Years after the idea was developed on paper, copies of the drawings and idea were taken to one of the major studios for consideration. Bob never heard another word about THE MONSTER FAMILY—but THE MUNSTERS family soon emerged as a popular TV series. Justice, at times, can be monstrous!

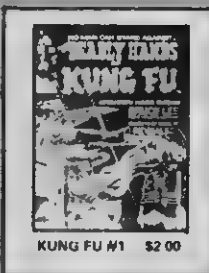
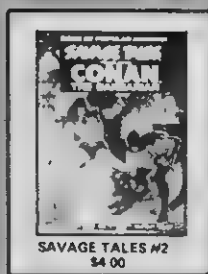
The next time our favorite floppy-eared bunny chomps on a carrot and says, "What's up, Doc?" we should take special note—for that "Doc" might very well boast the last name of Jekyll . . . or Frankenstein.



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VARIATIONS ON A



Do you think all vampires wear tuxedos? Do you think they all spend their days at rest in their coffins? Not on your bat-wing! Some vampires are definitely non-conformists and Lugosi and Lee would not be caught dead in their company. Don Glut reveals all the bloody details about these "Other" vampires.

By Don Glut

With so many Dracula imposters prowling about in their identifying black capes, it's refreshing to know that a great many of the motion picture screen's undead have not used the venerable old Count as their model. Vampires of all sexes, shapes and species have bared their sharp canines since the early days of the movies. They are (un)living proof that Count Dracula does not, in fact, own the patent on the vampire image.

The word *vampire* was the proverbial household word during the silent days of motion pictures. But more often than not, a silent film with the term *vampire* in its title signified the "Theda Bara" bastardization of the word—*vamp*, describing an evil, conniving, opportunistic woman who drains away a man's wealth, dignity, even his very will to live. These "vampires," flitted about the screen in a plethora of films: like Universal's *WAS SHE A VAMPIRE?* (1915), *THE BELOVED VAMPIRE* (1917) and *THE BLOND VAMPIRE* (1922). There were also vampiric touches in genuine fantasy films of the silent era, like *THE ENCHANTED WELL*, a delightful short subject made in 1903 by the former French stage magician, *George Melies*. At the climax of *THE ENCHANTED WELL*, a figure apparently intended to be Satan raises his cloak and, before a startled assemblage, transforms into a flying bat.

The very first vampire movie which we know of—that is, vampire in its classical sense, that of a resuscitated corpse that attacks the living for their blood—is the 1922 silent classic *NOSFERATU, A SYMPHONY OF TERROR*, a German film directed by

anything every seen (or, to date, ever to be seen) on the motion picture screen. So atypical of the Lugosi-type Dracula, Count Orlock appeared as a tall, gaunt ambulatory corpse, his movements confined by the stiffness of *rigor mortis*. He was completely bald, with satanic eyebrows, an almost expressionless dead-white face, pointed ears, a great hawk nose, eyes peering from blackened sockets, and a pair of fangs set in the front of the mouth. Orlock's fingers terminated in enormous hooked claws. His garb was that of some earlier century, unfettered by tuxedo or flowing cloak.

Unfortunately—for Murnau anyway—the changes he executed between *Dracula* and *NOSFERATU* were not severe enough. The plot of *NOSFERATU* remained extremely close to Stoker's book—closer, in fact, than most movie versions of *Dracula* filmed since then. Bram Stoker's widow promptly took legal action against the film. It was not until years later that *NOSFERATU* could be legally shown in the United States; and when the film did receive American distribution it was already a dated piece and, consequently, not a box office triumph. Nevertheless, the film—with its frightening atmosphere, its authentic locations (real castles, ships, forests, etc.) and the superb portrayal by Max Schreck—remains one of most superb vampire films ever made.

Lon Chaney, the silent screen's master of pantomime and make-up, added the countenance of a vampire to his celebrated list of a "Thousand Faces" in the MGM film of 1927, *LONDON AFTER MIDNIGHT*. The actor devised a truly impressive and frightening (for its day) make-up for his vampire. He darkened his eye sockets and attached small, almost undetectable, wires to make his orbs distend. Additional wires forced his mouth into a perpetual grin, displaying a set of upper and lower fangs, all of equal length. Chaney then donned a scraggly, straw-like wig, a tall beaver hat and a black outfit equipped with a cape cut to resemble the wings of a bat. But even with so original a horror as this prowling through the shadowy sets of *LONDON AFTER MIDNIGHT*, the film, directed by Tod Browning, was not about a real vampire. A throwback to a style of gothic literature where the supernatural was always exposed

VAMPIRE THEME

Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau. Ironically, *NOSFERATU* was a version of *Dracula* but it presented the vampire in a style much to the contrary of the Dracula image as established by Bram Stoker in his novel, published in 1897. The Lugosian Dracula stereotype was not known in 1922, since that image would not even be established on the stage until two years later. Even so, Murnau did not go back to Stoker's description of Count Dracula for a very good reason. The novel *Dracula* was in copyright and *NOSFERATU* was an unauthorized filming of it.

F.W. Murnau went to great lengths to disguise his plagiarized version of *Dracula*. He altered the names of the characters, including that the Vampire Count himself. Dracula was now called Count Orlock (played by German actor *Max Schreck*). But the Count's name was not the only metamorphosis to be perpetrated by Murnau. Orlock's very appearance was to be unlike

as an elaborate hoax or a set of unlikely misunderstandings, *LONDON AFTER MIDNIGHT* proved to be a murder mystery with the vampire element used to trap a very human killer. Chaney also enacted the role of the police inspector.

With *DRACULA* premiering in movie theatres in 1931, the vampire image had been established. Yet there were other vampire films that attempted to shy away from the Lugosi prototype. *VAMPYR* (1932) was Carl Dreyer's loose and experimental version of J. Sheridan Le Fanu's classic novelette, *Carmilla*. The vampire in this film was portrayed as an old hag (played by *Henriette Gerard*). The hero, David Gray (*Julian West*, aka Baron Nicolas de Gunzburg, who put up some of the money for the film), encounters such portentous happenings as a witch's Sabbath and a young woman who is dying apparently from the attack of a vampire. Gray offers his own blood for a transfusion in hopes of saving

the girl. While his blood is being tapped, Gray hallucinates, experiencing himself trapped within a locked coffin while the old vampire woman looks down through the transom.

Variations on the vampire theme were not infrequent during the 1930s. In 1933, Majestic released its version of the theme under the title *THE VAMPIRE BAT*. A small village is plagued by allegedly vampiric attacks. Vampire bats wing through the shadows while human victims are found drained of their blood. After each attack a suspicious figure, wearing a long black cloak, is glimpsed in the vicinity. To all of these questionable goings on, add the fact that the town idiot, Herman Gleib (played by *Dwight Frye*, recreating his portrayal of Renfield from the 1931 *DRACULA* film), keeps pet bats. The villagers, inflamed to put a stop to the vampire attacks, focus their vengeful eyes on Herman and pursue him with stakes. It is only after Herman has been killed that the vampire killings are exposed as a hoax. Actually, mad scientist Dr. Otto Von Niemann (*Lionel Atwill*) has been perpetuating the vampire scare, commanding the entranced Emil Borst (*Robert Fraser*) to secure human victims for the purpose of furnishing blood for his creation—a pulsating, living blob.

The vampire theme was mixed with that of the werewolf two years later in the Chesterfield-Invincible production, *CONDEMNED TO LIVE*. *Ralph Morgan* portrayed the offspring of a woman bitten in Africa by a vampire bat. The child grows to maturity only to discover

that he is now at the mercy of the full moon, which transforms him into a sanguinary creature of the night every time it rises.

Dwight Frye returned in 1943 to again recreate his Renfield characterization for PRC's first and only vampire film, *DEAD MEN WALK*. *George Zucco*, a perennial supporting actor in "big" pictures and a major performer in "small" pictures, starred as both a vampire, and his living—and virtuous—twin brother. Frye wore a hunchback in this film (as if combining his Renfield role with that of his "Fritz" in the 1931 *FRANKENSTEIN*, and served the vampire much as he had Count Dracula twelve years earlier. *DEAD MEN WALK* is a dreadful bore, not even good as "camp" humor, except for the scenes of Frye, wild-eyed and grinning as he beckons his undead master to rise from his coffin at nightfall.

ISLE OF THE DEAD (1945) was RKO's atmospheric vampire film, produced by the master of subtle terror, Val Lewton. The film starred Boris Karloff as a superstitious military general who blames the plague on a small Greek island on vampires (here called the *vrovolakas*). The *vrovolakas* scare is reinforced when a woman, buried alive, returns from the grave to engage herself in a murderous spree before finally killing herself. *ISLE OF THE DEAD* is disappointing to monster fans expecting to see a fanged vampire performing his traditional acts of bloodthirsty mayhem. But even with the vampire existing as such only in the gullible mind



50 Robert Fraser is the subjugated creature about to attack Melvyn Douglas in *The Vampire Bat*

of the general, the film has an atmosphere of lurking horror, a quality lacking in so many films of this genre.

That same year, Republic Pictures shifted away from their staple of serials, Westerns and John Wayne epics and made **THE VAMPIRE'S GHOST**, a film which proved that the studio should have remained with the types of action films they knew best. Surprisingly, **THE VAMPIRE'S GHOST** was originally supposed to be an adaptation of Polidori's vampire story, *The Vampyre* (see *Vampire Tales* #1 for a graphic representation of the story), with the undead nobleman Lord Ruthven as the antagonist. But *Leigh Brackett's* original treatment for the film was changed to fit more into Republic's style of movie-making. To begin, Ruthven was changed to Webb Fallon, the owner of an African tavern. Webb Fallon was portrayed by Shakespearean actor, *John Abbott*, who told this writer during an interview in 1972:

"In those days, you tried to keep in big 'A' pictures as much as possible. My then-agent asked me if I wanted to do **THE VAMPIRE'S GHOST**. I didn't want to, fearing it would hurt my career. He said, 'Do you want the money?' And I said, 'Well, of course I do.' He said, 'Well no one ever sees these 'B' pictures. They're shown only out in the sticks and nobody in the business will ever see it.' And now it's on television every night!"

In the character of Fallon, the very British actor presented an image of the vampire quite different from the usual Dracula mold. Instead of sleeping in a coffin, he carried with him a miniature casket filled with his native soil. Wearing a typical Jungle Jim style outfit, he



Fraser as Emil Borst has been successful in delivering another victim to Dr. Otto Von Niemann (Lionel Atwill) in this **Vampire Bat** scene



In **The Vampire's Ghost** pith helmeted Grant Withers and the rest of his safari seem to be on the lookout for some sinister menace

paraded about the jungle in the brightest daylight, shielded only by a pair of dark glasses. He did, however, retain some of the trappings familiar to vampire buffs, including a taste for human blood and an inability to cast a reflection in a mirror.

THE VAMPIRE'S GHOST opens with an establishing shot of Africa. "When the film was previewed in the screening room, and they heard my voice say 'Africa . . . ' over the opening scene, the Republic executives knew they had a hit," laughed Abbott. The film continued with the usual Republic fight fests and with rowdy *Roy Barcroft* becoming one of the vampire's early victims, after wrecking much of Fallon's furniture in a barroom brawl. Fallon then leads an expedition through the jungle in search of an ancient temple. A native recognizes Fallon for what he is (the vampire legend herein identified as an *African* tradition) and hurls a lance through his heart. The first rays of the moon revive the dying vampire (the only scene retained from the Polidori tale). But he is eventually destroyed at the temple site in the flames of a roaring fire.

The list of non-Dracula style vampire films continues, with some blood-drinking monsters even coming from outer space, like THE THING (1951) and NOT OF THIS EARTH (1957). The Three Stooges almost succumbed to a race of lovely female vampires on the planet Venus in SPACE SHIP SAPPY (1957), while *Marshall Thompson's* brother became FIRST MAN INTO SPACE (1959), only to return from his pioneer mission as a bloated monster thirsting for human blood.

The Fifties contributed a number of non-Dracula image vampires to the screen, including the British film BLOOD OF THE VAMPIRE (1958). Dr. Callistratus



This is the menace of *The Vampire's Ghost*—Webb Fallon, vampire (portrayed by John Abbott) and his victim, Peggy Stewart.

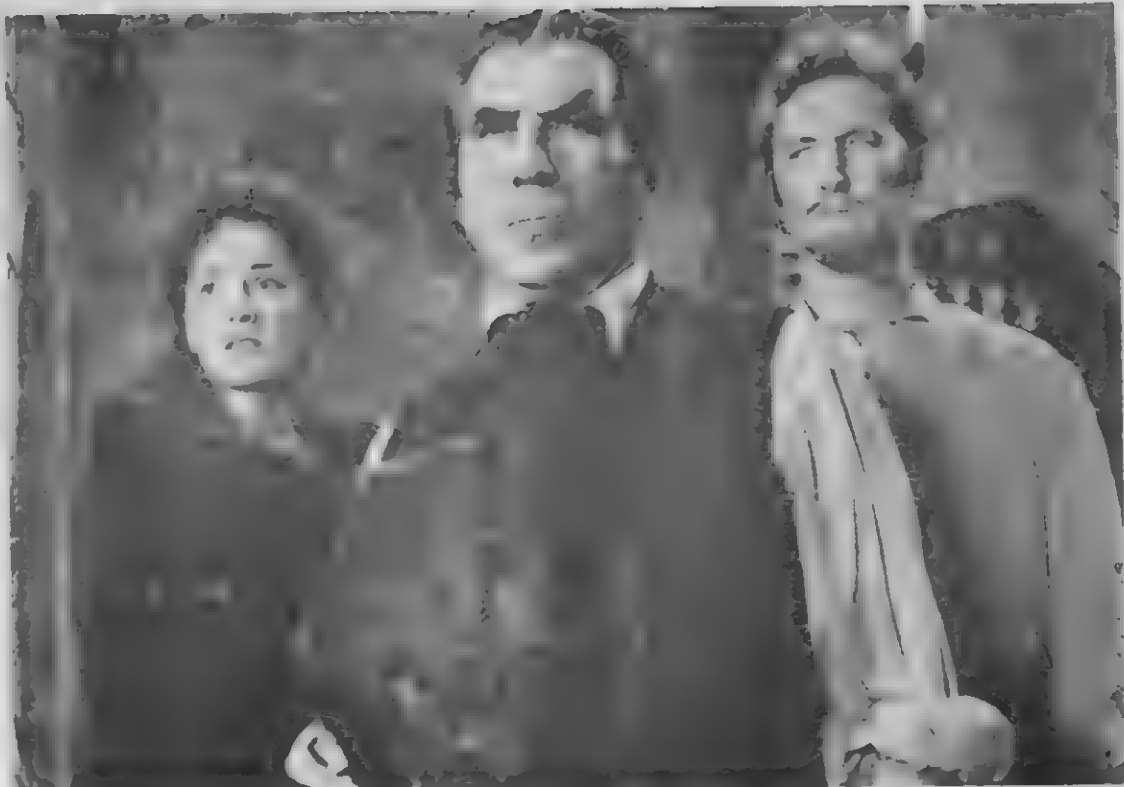
(played by *Sir Donald Wolfitt* in make-up that gave him a startling resemblance to Lugosi) was a Transylvania-based mad doctor whose experiments with human blood (not to mention his Lugosi face) branded him a vampire in the minds of the villagers. He is impaled through the heart, only to be revived by means of a prophetic heart transplant. Callistratus continues his sadistic experiments until he falls prey to his own vicious (and hungry) dogs.

Universal-International's non-Dracula offering of 1959 was CURSE OF THE UNDEAD. The film was a valid attempt at experimenting with the horror film, for it combined the vampire motif with the Western. *Michael Pate* portrayed Don Drago Robles (who traveled incognito as gunslinger Drake Robey), the undead of the title. The vampire was portrayed as a gunfighter who lets his opponents shoot first. Then, as his victims gawk at the futile results of their accurately fired bullets, Robey casually guns them down. A unique touch in the film was the explanation of how the vampire nature was gradually overtaking Robey's body; it becomes more and more uncomfortable for him to walk about in the sunlight. But he does manage to confront the town minister for a showdown in the brightly lit street. Robey is destroyed by a bullet fortified with a cross carved from a piece of Jesus Christ's original cross.

Italian director *Mario Bava* created one of the screen's most incredible trips into a realm of terror in 1960 with BLACK SUNDAY, which introduced *Barbara Steele* to American audiences as a vampire witch. Ms. Steele, a striking beauty with long raven hair and magnificent eyes, played Princess Ada Vajda, a bewitching vampiress who is destroyed when a mask of spikes is pounded into her face. Her vampire lover, Prince Javutich (*Ivo Garrani*), suffers the same fate. Both vampires are revived two hundred years later, when the Princess attempts to replace her descendant and double, Katya Vajda (also played by *Barbara Steele*). The hero of the film defeats Javutich after a physical battle, then finds both Ada and Katya, both claiming to be the latter. Ada finally exposes her true nature when the real Katya is not affected by the crucifix. Her body revealed to be that of a rotting corpse, Ada is taken away by the villagers and promptly burned at the stake. BLACK



Michael Pate as gunslinger Drake Robey, in *Curse of the Undead*. He is immune to ordinary lead, but not to silver bullets—or the charms of the swooning Kathleen Crowley



Sir Donald Wolfitt as Dr. Callistratus (center) was made to resemble Bela Lugosi in the 1931 *Blood of the Vampire*. He's supposed to be leading Barbara Shelley and Vincent Ball to safety, but don't bet your Marvel trading stamps on it.



One of the best variations on the Undead came in *The Fearless Vampire Killers* with Ian Quarrier as a homosexual vampire.

SUNDAY is a masterpiece of cinematic horror, thankfully filmed in low key black and white, and thereby creating a veritable world in which such supernatural fiends as vampires and witches appropriately exist.

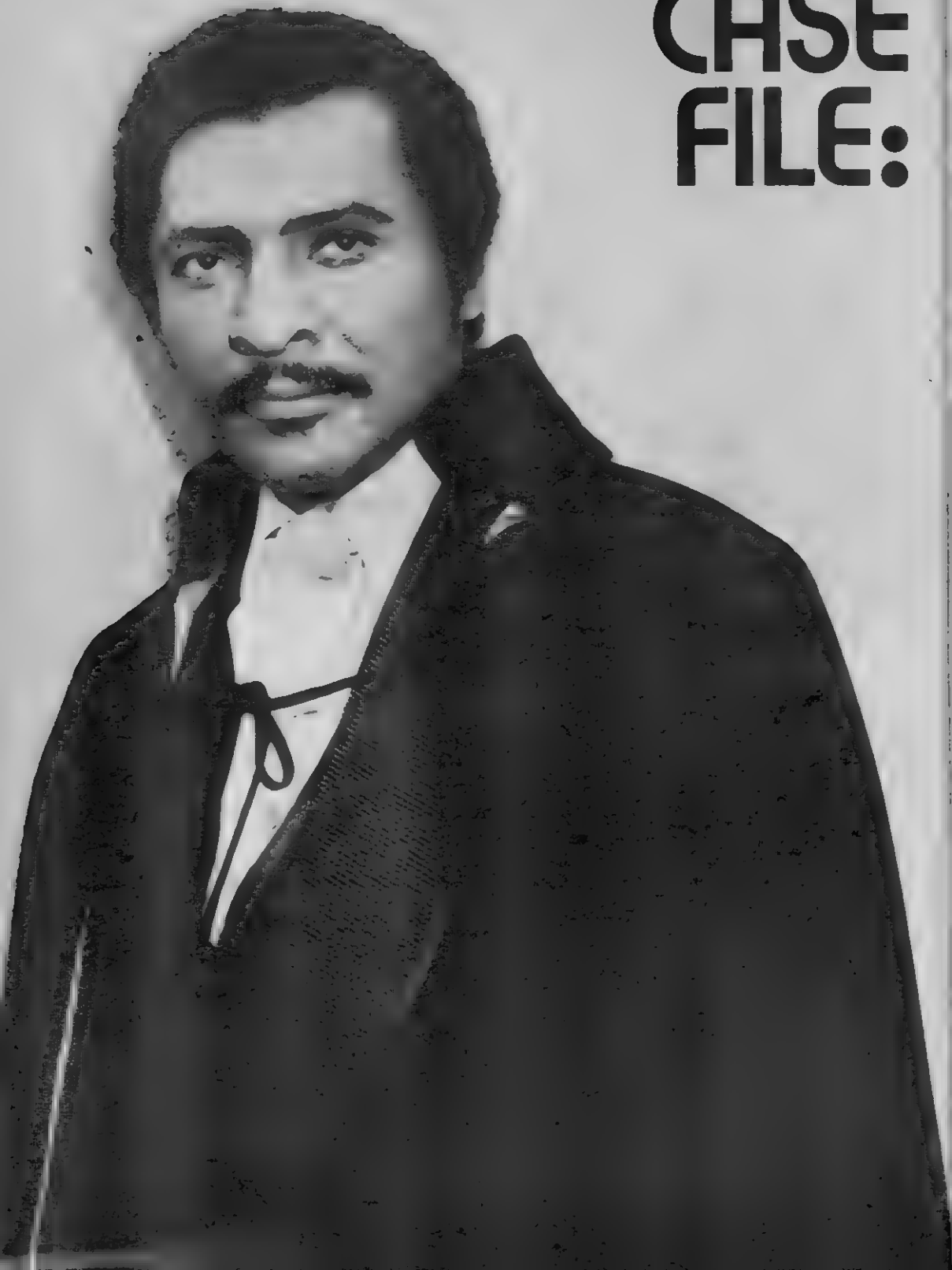
Bava approximated, but did not equal, his **BLACK SUNDAY** with *The Wurdalak*, the final segment of his three-part horror film **BLACK SABBATH** (color 1963). Based on a story by Alexei Tolstoy, *The Wurdalak* starred Boris Karloff in his only role as a vampire. Karloff made a fine vampire—not in the Dracula sense, but in accordance with actual vampires of tradition and legend. As the patriarchal Gorca, Karloff portrayed the vampire as the foul, unpleasant resuscitated corpse that runs rampant through so many supposedly true accounts, a creature that reeks of the grave and decay.

In Russian folklore, the *wurdalak* is a special breed of vampire which preys only upon his loved ones. Gorca returns to his family after beheading a notorious *wurdalak*. But he is now tainted with the vampire curse. He stalks the youngest member of his household and precipitates an epidemic that eventually renders every one of his loved ones undead. *The Wurdalak*, like **BLACK SUNDAY**, has a pervading atmosphere that makes it one of the better screen excursions into vampire lore.

We have seen vampires portrayed as saloon keepers, as cowboys, even as extraterrestrial invaders. What does the future offer? Will Mankind carry its legends of Transylvania to the Moon and beyond? Will Vampires still fly in the Twenty-First Century? Wait and see.

Only time will tell.

CASE FILE:



BLACULA

The movie that was a film first—a fine horror picture with a fine cast, headed by a black actor of stature—William Marshall. Special Consultant Eric Hoffman gives us the facts, and asks: Was Dracula a bigot?

By Eric Hoffman

"Black prince . . . I curse you with my name . . . You will be Blacula! A vampire like myself . . ." Thus ran the curse placed upon African prince Mamuwalde by the master vampire of them all, Count Dracula. And with these words, American-International Pictures unleashed a new terror character that really caught on with film audiences in 1972.

It was inevitable that the realm of the horror film would be touched upon by the 'black exploitation film' craze that was sweeping through the country. But where

the heroes of such films were more or less superman-type figures, doing their thing, without real audience empathy, the character of Prince Mamuwalde (a.k.a. Blacula) was a well-constructed combination of supernatural menace and pathos.

The greatest factor in the success of putting over the character was actor *William Marshall*, a man of imposing stature both professionally and physically, with a long, distinguished international career behind him. Marshall threw himself into the part, making Blacula more than just the usual screen vampire. This was a character you felt sorry for. He had become one of the blood-thirsty Undead through no fault of his own . . . except for trying to get Count Dracula to sign a petition advocating the abolition of the slave trade in the early 1800s. For that, Dracula imprisoned Mamuwalde in a coffin (after vampirizing him) and locked the prince and his wife, Luva, inside a dungeon of Castle Dracula for over 150 years. One could say that Count Dracula was not only a vampire, but a bit of a bigot . . . with a vengeance!

In his interpretation of Blacula, William Marshall managed to make the audience sense the inner torment this accursed man was going through; for Mamuwalde was evidently a gentle man by nature, and his vampiric curse forced him into a continual struggle against his unholy craving . . . much like a mainline junkie trying to stay off heroin, or an alcoholic struggling to get away from the bottle. But the moments where the vampiric side of his nature gained control were the high-powered scenes of the film! One had a feeling of the controlled fury boiling inside this tormented being, a fury barely held in check until—in the film's final scenes—Blacula 'let it all hang out' with the devastating impact of an exploding bomb.

Written by Joan Torres and Raymond Koenig, **BLACULA** opens with Count Dracula adding Mamuwalde to his list of victims and placing his dread curse upon the African nobleman. Following the titles, a time shift occurs, taking the viewing to present times . . . with two interior decorators, Billy and Bobby, purchasing the furnishings of the now deceased (?) vampire's castle. Among the various acquisitions is—you guessed it—the coffin containing Mamuwalde. The various antiques are transported to their warehouse in Los Angeles, where Billy and Bobby inadvertently release Blacula, and become his first victims.

At a funeral home where Bobby's body is lying in state, Blacula, hiding behind some curtains, observes some friends of the young man paying their last respects. They



Vonetta McGee, William Marshall, and Denise Nicholas in a posed publicity shot for **Blacula**.

are Gordon Thomas (*Thalmus Rasulala*), a police pathologist, his fiance Michelle (*Denise Nicholas*) and her sister Tina (*Vonetta McGee*) who just happens to be a dead ringer for Mamuwalde's Luva! Sure that his lost love has returned, Blacula tries to contact the girl outside the funeral home, only to scare the wits out of Tina. Mamuwalde may be a handsome looking devil, but he evidently doesn't know anything about a contemporary citydweller's fear of muggers. Tina flees, losing her purse, with Blacula finding it and pursuing her—only to run right in front of a taxicab driven by a lady cabbie, Juanita. For causing him to lose sight of Tina—as well as for hitting him—Juanita becomes Blacula's newest victim!

The following night, while Gordon, Tina and Michelle are celebrating Michelle's birthday at the Ethiopia Club, Blacula appears, ostensibly to return Tina's purse. It's literally love at first sight for the two, now that Tina's in a more normal atmosphere. However, Blacula makes a hasty retreat from the club when his picture is taken by Nancy, the club photographer. Needless to say, since vampires don't register on film, Blacula adds Nancy to his menu. She, in turn, is found by Barnes, a policeman, whom she proceeds to vampirize.

As the attraction between Tina and Blacula grows (with Blacula telling her everything—literally—about himself), Gordon is beginning to have his own suspicions about the cause of the recent deaths—especially when Bobby's body vanishes from the morgue. Getting Michelle to come with him to the local cemetery, Gordon opens the grave of Billy . . . only to be attacked by the living corpse. Juanita also returns as a vampire and does in Sam, the morgue attendant, after he has received a warning from Gordon to take the body out of the cooler and then lock up the room she is in. Accompanied by Homicide Lieutenant Peters, Gordon finds himself confronted by a blood-thirsty Juanita-vampire. Only by a combination of crucifix and the first rays of the morning

sun is this newest member of the Undead destroyed.

A believer now, Lt. Peters listens to Gordon's theory of vampires. The 'disease' is spreading like an epidemic, as they soon discover when a dragnet leads them to the warehouse of the two decorators, and a confrontation with a horde of vampires, including Barnes, the policeman. The vampires are dispatched with fire, but Blacula escapes, after warning Gordon and Peters not to interfere in his plans for Tina.

Even a full-scale blockade fails to prevent Tina from joining Blacula in his new hideout, the underground maze of a huge gas works. Gordon, Michelle, Peters and a squad of police invade the plant, with Tina shot in the ensuing pursuit. As Tina lies dying, Blacula takes the only step he can.

When Gordon and the others find the vampire's coffin, they drive a stake into it—only to discover that they've staked *Tina!* Beserk with rage after Tina was shot, Blacula—who had already disposed of several policeman—decides that he cannot live without Tina, and he sacrifices himself by walking into the rays of the rising sun. All Gordon and the others find is the remains of a skeleton and Blacula's clothing.

A first-time experiment, **BLACULA** was a film that split fans of the genre. Some hated it; some loved it. All did agree on one thing: William Marshall was excellent as the title vampire.

The film, despite its obviously small budget, had some very effective moments. Count Dracula's grisly, blood-gorged visage as he places his curse upon Mamuwalde. The battle in the cemetery with Billy's living corpse. The gradual return to life of Juanita and her attack on Gordon and Lt. Peters. Blacula's vampire legion doing battle with the police in the old warehouse, climaxing in a blazing finale. Blacula's rampage through the gas plant, hurling policemen off stairwells, into power boards, etc.



An enraged Blacula is preparing to hurt a gasoline drum at his tormentors. Considering the price of gasoline, who can blame him for being mad?



The cause of all of Blacula's troubles—no, it isn't Vonetta McGee as Luva, but rather Count Dracula (in the person of Charles Macaulay).

Vonetta McGee and Denise Nicholas handled their parts of Tina and Michelle nicely, with Miss McGee appropriately terrified, tender and tormented. *Emily Yancy* made the most of her brief stint as Nancy, while *Ketty Lester* had a nice bit as the lady cabbie who chews Blacula out for stepping in front of her vehicle, and then gets second thoughts—too late.

Gordon Pinsent (who turned in an excellent performance as the President in, *COLOSSUS—THE FORBIN PROJECT*) played a properly skeptical Lieutenant Peters—after all, human vampires are not what one could call an everyday occurrence, even in Los Angeles. And horror film veteran, *Elisha Cook* did his usual professional job as the doomed morgue attendant. Some comedy relief came from *Jitu Cumbuka*, who played a jive-talking hipster named Skillet whose mirror-faced sunglasses give Blacula some uncomfortable moments in the film.

Actor *Charles Macaulay*—fast becoming a familiar face in the better-made chillers—received special billing for his cameo role of Dracula. Dignified one moment, utterly malignant the next, his physical appearance was in complete contrast to the usual screen image of the Master of the Undead.

Director *William Crain* was responsible for keeping the film moving at a lively pace, and he did a good job, aided and abetted by composer *Gene Page's* 'soul' score. Even the stunt work—directed by *George Fisher* and seen mostly in the battle in the warehouse—was effective and well executed. And, finally, *Roger George's* special effects—which included a cartoon vampire bat—were as well produced as could be expected, considering the budget allocated for the film.

Extensive location filming around Los Angeles was quite evident, and in some cases added to the film's atmosphere.

Seeing that this venture was a success, AIP followed



Elisha Cook adds a first to a distinguished career, by being attacked by a lady vampire (Ketty Lester) in *Blacula*

tradition and decided to bring the Blacula character back the following year. *SCREAM, BLACULA, SCREAM* (working title *BLACULA II*) combined vampirism with voodoo to good effect—with an evidently larger budget allocated the production.

The second picture was allegedly set in Louisiana (although actually filmed in Los Angeles) and the element of *voodoo* was introduced. Through a voodoo ceremony, Blacula is brought back to this world, somewhat upset about being pulled so abruptly from his eternal rest. But with a chance to meet gorgeous *Pam Grier*, he should complain?

That ends the *BLACULA* saga to date—will there be any more episodes in the Undead "life" of this black Lord of the Vampires? As to that, only time and the omnipotent box office can tell.



Thalmus Rasulua in the work clothes of his character, Gordon, does not seem too frightened by the vampire, Billy (Rick Metzler). Michelle (Denise Nicholas) is more disturbed by the attack in *Blacula*

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THE NIGHT STALKER IN HIS LAIR

The real-life persona of Janos Skorzeny, The Night Stalker himself, is interviewed by the mighty *Monsters of the Movies* team, Al Sattin and Heather Johnson, with the assistance of Tess Dodge. What does a film vampire think of his role, of other screen monsters, of life, of love, of practical jokes? Read on and find out.



ABC-TV's made-for-television movie sensation of 1972, *THE NIGHT STALKER*, was a milestone in the field of screen horror in many ways. This fast-paced, suspenseful production—produced by Dan Curtis of *DARK SHADOWS* fame—broke away from many of the hackneyed “traditions” that have plagued the genre for decades, and became, with its first showing, the **highest-rated** made-for-television movie, as well as one of the **top three** highest-rated motion pictures ever shown on television. Indeed, the success of this production was calculated to make even the most critical of skeptics take notice.

Perhaps most importantly, it proved an ideal vehicle for bringing much-deserved acclaim to two previously obscure, but highly creative, individuals: a hitherto unknown and unpublished author named **Jeff Rice**, from whose original novel Richard Matheson's screenplay was adapted; and, a brilliant stage, screen, and video actor who is now receiving the recognition he so justly deserves: **Barry Atwater**.

Since his initial screen debut, Barry has appeared in more than a score of motion pictures, including *NIGHTMARE* and Alfred Hitchcock's *THE WRONG MAN*; his stage credits run the gamut from *ROPE* to *HAMLET*, and his roles in television ranging from *KUNG FU* to *STAR TREK* are evidence enough of his versatility—but his savage portrayal of Janos Skorzeny, the vampire stalked by reporter Carl Kolchak in *THE NIGHT STALKER*, who speaks **not one line of dialogue** throughout the story, will doubtless continue to be applauded by movie enthusiasts of every ilk for years to come.

MOM: How did you happen to be chosen for the role of Skorzeny in *THE NIGHT STALKER*?

ATWATER: I got a call from my agent saying that someone at the Goldwyn studios wanted to see me about a role in a vampire picture. So, my agent went over there with me, and I took some photos along. I showed the photos to a man who turned out to be *Dan Curtis*, and he said, “This is *exactly* what I want!” He hadn't paid any attention to *me*—maybe he'd looked at me for a tenth of a second—but the photos were what did it. And right there and then I got the part.

MOM: You didn't have to do a screen-test, or anything?

ATWATER: No. I was chosen just on the basis of the photographs. And, that was that. So then my agent went into the office with Curtis, and they rigged up this lousy deal . . .

MOM: (laughing). Where have we have *that* song before?

ATWATER: Well, he wasn't a very aggressive agent. Anyway, that was it. I got the script, which I really didn't have to study, because I had no lines. But I began to think about the part, what I'd do with it. This is almost automatic—when you pick up a script, your mind begins to work, you don't have to tell it to. And then there were some wardrobe fittings, some preliminary make-up work—the false teeth, the contact lenses . . .

MOM: Did you have any difficulty wearing the lenses?

ATWATER: No, the only problem we had with the lenses involved the make-up. During shooting, the make-up man would put a thin line of red greasepaint on the edge of my eyelids. When the lenses were put in, they would carry some of that red stuff with them, and that was irritating. But the lenses themselves didn't bother me.

MOM: Were they rose-tinted lenses like those worn by *Christopher Lee* in his *DRACULA* films?

ATWATER: They had very prominent bloodshot veins painted into them. They were total contacts—they covered the whole eye. I had two sets, one with slightly visible veins, another with heavier veins, whichever was appropriate for the particular scene—depending upon how angry the vampire was supposed to be.

MOM: How familiar were you with your film predecessors—*Bela Lugosi*, *Christopher Lee* and company?

ATWATER: Well, I'd seen the Lugosi stuff, and I'd seen some of *Christopher Lee's* films, but that didn't make any difference to me, because this wasn't that kind of story. There were no capes, no bats, and it wasn't a romantic vampire figure.

MOM: So you really didn't consider what had been done with previous vampire roles?

ATWATER: No, because it didn't apply. I just figured, here's a guy who *needs blood*. I figured he can't be very different from a guy who needs heroin, who's an addict. It's not a question of being immoral, or cruel; it's a question of “I've got to have it!” *Do it, that's all.* “It's too bad if people die, I'm sorry about that, but I have this hang-up.” That was the attitude I took. The

One of the most frightening scenes in horror films, believes Barry Atwater, is this one between vampiress *Ketty Lester* and potential victim *Elisha Cooke* in *Blacula*.



people who were chasing me were my enemies. *They* were the "heavies," the "villians."

MOM: How did you feel about playing in a horror movie?

ATWATER: I didn't care. There really isn't any difference. What's the difference between a horror film and a straight film? It's a part, and all parts have their challenges. Each part is a brand-new experience.

MOM: Did anyone caution you against it?

ATWATER: No. I've played all sorts of roles since I started working in the industry; I've never specialized in any one thing. So, it wouldn't bother me, or throw me off base. I don't think the picture hurt me a bit, a lot of people saw it and liked it. I was walking down a street in San Francisco last July, and some man rushed up to me and said, "Hey, excuse me! Weren't you in *THE NIGHT STALKER*?" I said yes, and suddenly his wife appeared and said, "Gee, we really liked that picture!" Actually, I don't think *THE NIGHT STALKER* was a "Horror film." I think it *borders* on being a horror film, but I really don't think it *is* a horror film.

MOM: Did anything particularly unusual or amusing happen to you during the filming?

ATWATER: The make-up man told me that Dan Curtis had sort of a queasy stomach, which I thought was kind of funny, having done *HOUSE OF DARK SHADOWS* and that sort of thing. So, one night while we were having dinner out at the Colonial Ranch I told him I had an idea for a really groovy, maybe "X"-rated horror film I wanted to tell him about. I then proceeded to outline, in great detail, this terribly morbid, gruesome story I made up about a psychotic young man who's so attached to the memory of his dead mother that he marries a succession of beautiful young girls, killing each one of them immediately—on their honeymoon—so that they'll more closely resemble his beloved, but deceased, mother. I really played it for the gory details. I said, "Imagine this in *color*, the color aspect is *marvelous*!" By this time Curtis was *writhing* in his chair, and I was just having

a *ball* with him. Maybe I'm sadistic . . . I haven't heard from Curtis since!

MOM: Anything further you'd care to say regarding *THE NIGHT STALKER*?

ATWATER: I don't think I have too much else to say about it, other than that the script was excellent, a really tight script. *Richard Matheson* apparently has the ability to visualize in his mind's eye what he wants to see on the screen, and he writes curt directions. A good recipe. Our director, *John Llewellyn Moxie* was able to capture good shots, and the cutter, *Desmond Marquette*—who I don't think has gotten nearly enough credit—put it together so that it moved at a very fast pace. There was no "dead air" in that story.

MOM: What sort of an aftermath did your appearance in *THE NIGHT STALKER* have? Have you been approached by any studios for further horror roles?

ATWATER: *Not a soul!*

MOM: That's *incredible*! Would you care to play any other type of fantasy-character?

ATWATER: Sure! The thing I'd like to have a whack at is playing in a *Gothic* film, and to make it as *real* as possible—to get away from the cliché playing. It's very difficult for an actor to avoid playing *mood*, or *attitude*. Useless he's aware of that and has a little "catachism" that he reads before he starts, he may slip into this rut. Some very good actors, actors who *know better*, do that, and some very good directors *let* this happen. And so, you, in the audience, watch the scene, and it may be very interesting, but something's *wrong*. You can't quite put your finger on it until you suddenly realize, hey, these people aren't *real*!

MOM: They're just walking through it . . .

ATWATER: Yes, they're not *real* at all. So, I think that would be an interesting experience. The fun of acting is *doing* it. And when it's done, you're ready to do the next thing.

MOM: The character of Skorzeny was sort of like that—a new experience, a break from the traditional vampire



One of Atwater's favorite films is *Frankenstein*. . . I couldn't watch the screen! I was that scared! I really got my money's worth

mold. He's not Dracula.

ATWATER: He's just an average, middle-class *vampire*, yes! But you know what's going to happen to a vampire anyhow—he's going to get a stake through his heart in the last reel—so where's the suspense?

MOM: Would you be interested in playing the Frankenstein Monster?

ATWATER: No, but I'd be interested in playing *Dr. Frankenstein*. I don't want to play *monsters*, as such.

MOM: What about some of the fantasy-oriented characters you've played in various TV series episodes? **STAR TREK**, for instance?

ATWATER: **STAR TREK** I enjoyed. I agreed personally with the thoughts and words of the character I portrayed, with what he had to say. I found it easy to read my lines and *mean* them. He was the prototype of the Vulcan philosophy of non-emotionalism. I felt that since he was one of the forerunners, he probably didn't have his emotional apparatus under as great a control as the later Vulcans did. So, he would show more emotion in what he said. The director and some of the cast, *Bill Shatner* and *Leonard Nimoy* in particular, disagreed with me heartily. We had a conference on the set, and they explained to me why my character couldn't show as much emotion as I was letting him show. They were sort of the "bosses," so I had to sit there and say, "Yes, yes." When we returned to shooting, I turned the emotion down a little bit, but certainly now way down to zero. I *couldn't*. I guess I was too much "into it." I did get a letter from one of the **STAR TREK** fans who said that *she* felt I made a better Vulcan than Nimoy did!

Then, there are some funny things that happen when I'm playing in these series. For instance, "*The Doll of Death*," a NIGHT GALLERY episode I did: *Alejandro Rey* is a great, loose actor—I got the impression he just walks onto the set and doesn't care if it all falls down on him or not; he's just not uptight, in any way, shape, or form. There was one scene in which he yanks the bridal veil off the girl's head, and I grab it out of his hand. We went for the take, he yanked the veil off her head, and put it *behind his back*, so that I couldn't get it! I got so mad, I *hit* him square in the chest! So, we had to do another take!

MOM: But you *did* get through another take after *that*?

ATWATER: Oh yeah. But you really get turned on in a scene, and you do things like that, things you don't normally do.

MOM: Did Mr. Rey *speak* to you during the remainder of the shooting?

ATWATER: Oh sure, who cares?

MOM: Things like this just get brushed off?

ATWATER: Sure! I also played in two episodes of **THE ALFRED HITCHCOCK SHOW**—in one I played a detective, but in the other I played the manager of "*The Thanatos Palace Hotel*"—a country estate for people who want to commit suicide, but are afraid to do it. So, they pay a nice, fat fee to live in comfort on this estate, never knowing when they're going to get "bumped off"—and no one ever escapes. It was a really good story, a good script, neatly done, and I had a ball playing in that.

MOM: What fantasy/horror films stand out in your mind as personal favorites?

ATWATER: Let's see . . . I have to try to remember when I got scared the most. I was a little kid when I first saw **FRANKENSTEIN**. That first time, when the monster walks up the tower stairs and we see him for the first time, I *couldn't* watch the screen! I was *that*



The romantic vampire, such as John Carradine's *Dracula*, shown here with Anne Gwynn in *House of Frankenstein*, does not hold great appeal for Atwater as a role to play.

scared! I really got my money's worth. That was a lot of fun. I mean, why cheat the audience? We go to these pictures to get a *thrill*.

I got *good* and scared during **THE THING FROM ANOTHER WORLD**. Generally, I don't get scared during horror films, because they're so *obvious*, I know *exactly* what's going to happen, and *when*. You can time it with a stopwatch—it's ten minutes since the main title, so such and such is going to happen now—and it *does*.

MOM: Which scenes, in particular, got to you in **THE THING**?

ATWATER: Oh, the opening, when the crew first *see* it, embedded in the ice—that's spooky! Then they put this big block of ice in a shed, and it *thaws* . . . already I'm getting goose pimples thinking about it! And then the very first glimpse of the creature—when they open that door, and a claw comes through it . . . Another of my favorite films is **THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN**, but the film doesn't *frighten* me.

MOM: It's just such a complete fantasy . . .

ATWATER: Pure fantasy! It's just a trip! I think a horror film really ought to *scare* me. There was a very good shot in **BLACULA**—remember *Kitty Lester* as the vampire? She's lying supposedly "dead" in the refrigerator at the morgue, and just as *Elisha Cook* takes her out into another room, the phone rings, and she *thaws*. When she came tearing down the corridor after him at super-speed, accompanied by that weird racket on the sound track, it was physically a very exciting moment. I thought it was the most exciting part of the whole picture.

MOM: That's funny, because I burst out *laughing* at that scene!

ATWATER: Well, it was *almost* funny!

MOM: That seems to have become AIP's "obligatory scene" in their vampire flicks—the shot of the vampire racing toward the camera at super-speed. It was used throughout the **COUNT YORGA** films.

ATWATER: Well, now in the two Dan Curtis vampire pictures, *THE NIGHT STALKER* and *DRACULA* (the television version featuring *Jack Palance*), they've found their conventions as well. The vampire in *THE NIGHT STALKER* was very strong, so Curtis' *DRACULA* is a very strong as well, he can break down the front door of a house...

MOM: He has the strength of ten men!

ATWATER: Right! And secondly, the leap from the third story window—somebody always gets thrown from a third story window, they did *that* in both pictures. And then, the growling—Palance growls a couple of times in *DRACULA*—now *that* growl is copyright, *I own that growl!*

MOM: Did you like *DRACULA*?

ATWATER: No, I would like to have seen somebody I'd never seen before as *DRACULA*. All I could see was Jack Palance.

MOM: Would you care to play *Dracula*?

ATWATER: No, I've already played a vampire. I think if it came to a question of playing another vampire-role, it'd be purely a matter of economics—how badly I need the money? Also, the prospect of playing a vampire as a *lead* would scare me a bit, because *then* I *might* run into the type-casting problem. I wouldn't want to risk that. I get to play a wide variety of roles—policemen, lawyers, good guys, bad guys, half-bad guys—and I like that.

MOM: There haven't been many good, continuing horror characters introduced in recent years. The newer characters don't seem to have the lasting appeal the original Universal stock character did. What do you think would be an effective type of character to introduce now?

ATWATER: You know, it could be that we've used them up now. We might have to wait thirty or forty years, till all of us die off, so these characters can reach a brand-new audience. I think a big problem in horror films—or almost *any* kind of melodrama—is the *form*. We know the form so well that, no matter what new, innovative things are plugged into it, we still know *exactly* what's going to happen.

MOM: And yet, horror films are so popular. There's always an audience for them.

ATWATER: Yes, but if I go to see a horror film, I want to be *really* entertained. And I *can't* be anymore, because I know the form too well. Film-makers don't realize how smart the audience is. They just don't realize that the people in that audience have all seen a *hundred* or more horror films, and so they make these films as though no one had ever seen a horror movie before. And we're *bored*, we've *been there!* Directors and producers can go very "far out," and we *will* follow—but if we know everything in advance, then we're *bored!* Take *2001*, for instance—now *that* was a *curious* ending! I saw that film *four times*, front row, center! And when it plays the Cinerama Theatre again, I'll pay to see it *again!*

MOM: Do you consider films like *WILLARD* or *FROGS* horror films?

ATWATER: If you're horrified by rats or frogs and snakes, then I guess they are. What would be horrible to *you?*

MOM: I always find the intentional cruelty displayed in those gore exploitation films disgusting. We walked out on *LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT*.

ATWATER: Yes, that kind of intelligent, deliberate cruelty, perpetrated by people who know better but do it for kicks—that's horrible. Now if there's *one* re-



The many moods of Barry Atwater, at home, in his own lair.

deeming feature—for instance, if the lead character, the witch-hunter, in *THE CONQUEROR WORM*, had really *believed* in witches and thought he was only *protecting* himself—that would be valid. But a character who doesn't believe in anything except exercising his power to humiliate and hurt someone, *that*, to me, is a horrible character. But I don't care to see movies about these characters, they only make me *mad*.

MOM: That kind of "horror" is not entertainment.

ATWATER: Uh-uh! It makes me *furious*; I want to *fight* when I see things like that. And then the other type the horror film, the fantasy, has become so puerile, I don't want to see it. So, unless they are as worthwhile as *2001*, I just don't want to see horror movies anymore!

THE BLOOD

By Barry Atwater



IS THE LIFE

The star of television's *The Night Stalker*—the stalking vampire himself—Barry Atwater reveals the study he has put into the lore and legends of the Undead, all in preparation for his most famous role, as Fate would have it. This was originally given as a

speech before a special meeting of the Count Dracula Society at the 30th World Science-Fiction Convention in Los Angeles, 1972, now prepared for publication by your editor, and introduced by the author of *The Night Stalker*, Jeff Rice.

BARRY ATWATER, who burst onto our TV screens with such snarling power as the vampire in the ABC-TV Movie *THE NIGHT STALKER* in the of 1972, was a key factor in making that film the highest rated motion picture ever made for television. Although he uttered not a line—in fact, not a word—in the film, Atwater is an actor of considerable strength and a man with a delicious sense of cynicism, possessing a rare wit. Without make-up, Barry looks more like a college professor than an ageless vampire, but—with a twinkle in his eyes—he describes himself as a “bachelor just under 90 years old, 6’ 1” tall, weight about 180 lbs. on a full tank of blood, with light brown hair and bloodshot blue eyes.”

His motion picture credits include *NIGHTMARE*,

Alfred Hitchcock's *THE WRONG MAN*, and *SWEET BIRD OF YOUTH*. His stage appearances have run the gamut from *ROPE* to *HAMLET* and the title role of Sir Thomas More in *A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS*. In addition, Barry has been seen in roles in countless television series, including such programs as *KUNG FU*, *STAR TREK*, *THE ALFRED HITCHCOCK SHOW*, and *MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE*.

Apart from his dramatic roles, Barry reads a great deal of history, psychology, religion, and science—and has a great interest in matters of mythology and the supernatural, as the following transcript of his speech on the mythology of blood before a meeting of the Count Dracula Society in California, clearly demonstrates.

—Jeff Rice

“Every sacrifice is a blood—not flesh—sacrifice!” The theme is carried out in this surrealistic moment from *Blood Suckers*.



If for the sake of argument, we accept with the philosopher Nietzsche the dictum that God is dead, we must also accept that the supernatural is dead and bid farewell to demons, ghosts and spirits—malific or benign. For contemporary man the enjoyment of the Gothic tale must become an exercise in nostalgia, a remembrance of a time beyond his own past. Today, St. George's Dragon can only be acceptably presented in terms of some extra-terrestrial life-form, or a genetic monster triggered into being by an excessive dose of nuclear radiation.

Yet, in the chthonic depths of the human psyche there is either a memory trace or, perhaps, an intuition that evil is still with us, and that it is of *this* world of men. The intergalactic ghoul or the creeping glob is in truth no more than a projection in contemporary symbolic images of something deeply felt in the dark and seldom-visited chambers of the mind. It is, therefore, fortunate that we can—with indeed some effort—project ourselves backward into a world where all things are not explained by post-Nineteenth-Century scientific materialism.

Today, for example, we know that blood is a fluid that is pumped by the heart through the various tissues of the body to bring nourishment to the cells and carry

away the waste products of their metabolism. But if we can forget this fact for a moment, and go back to a time when the function of blood was in no way understood as we now know it—if we can, through an act of creative imagination, re-enter the world of those who saw the cosmos in terms of a very different science—perhaps we can recapture their feelings and apprehensions of what was, to them, a very real and living world.

To these people, blood was the very mysterious and divine essence of life itself. And the heavens, were peopled by spirits who had a very real effect on the people of this world, for good or for ill. And these same spirits were intimately connected with the life-blood of both animals and men. Imagine, if you will, a world in which every object is related to every other object by means of words, names and spirits, so that even the word "blood" can bring into action the invisible spirits that are always hovering nearby. Today we would call such a system "magic" and accord it no more than a disdainful disbelief; but the people of those times held their system in the same awe and respect that modern man accords to his science and technology.

Now, to be sure, our contemporary devices don't always work, but we don't discard our premises, we simply say that some piece of equipment has developed a "technical hang-up," and we try again. And so it was with the ancients. If a particular charm didn't work, the operator blamed himself for not saying all the proper names in the proper order, or perhaps mispronouncing one of them. It wasn't easy. And the problem of the magical names for blood and the blood spirits was complicated by the fact that the earliest languages of the Fertile Crescent were written without vowels. This mattered little in the individual tribal community because the spoken language had only one vowel. This had been admirably demonstrated by John Allegretto in his recent book, *The Cross and the Sacred Artichoke*. It was only when the tribes began to intermix that vowel confusion arose, and with it a concomitant confusion in the pronunciation of the magic names.

As an example, in the early Akkadian period, a sentence which in English would read: "I need blood for food" would sound something like this: "Oo nood blood for food," since the Akkadian vowel sound has been determined to be "oo." In the nearby Gilbashite community, where the only vowel sound was "ee" our sentence would sound like this: "Ee need bleed beer feed." One can easily see that with the intermingling of peoples there came an intermingling of speech sounds, and such words as "blood" and "bleed," "food" and "feed" would become common to the intermingled tribes.

But what to do about the names of the spirits and the angels? If one needed to staunch the flow of blood from a wound, would one invoke Azaradel, Oozooroodool, or Eezeereedeel? It was just such problems as these that encouraged our ancestors to search for surer methods, and it was in that search that they discovered that the physical universe could be manipulated effectively without recourse to the names of spirits and angels. And so began the slow but certain demise of the supernatural world . . . at least, as far as the textbooks were concerned.

Incidentally, the artichoke in the titles of Allegretto's books is the Jerusalem artichoke. But enough of paleography. We have more serious things to consider.

To begin with, blood is seen as being the life-spirit of man and animals, and, as such, either sacred or cap-



... Even today, people still feel the mysterious and ineffable magic associated with blood . . . Barry Atwater comments. This scene from Hemisphere Pictures' *The Blood Drinkers* reveals at least the fascination with the red stuff evidenced by one vampiric nobleman, and his furry, winged friend



But even after the destruction of a vampire, the magic power of blood can reanimate his scattered dust, according to *Dracula, Prince of Darkness*.

able of being made sacred to the ruling spirits of the universe. In this phase the use or control of blood was always accompanied by the invocation of the magical names of the spirits, angels or gods. In the second phase, the magical or healing power of blood was still recognized, but people had begun to forget that spiritual powers had to be invoked and propitiated. And in the third phase—our modern period—blood has been recognized as a simple thing in itself without any secondary, supernatural attachments.

And yet, even today, many people still feel the mysterious and ineffable magic associated with blood, that we can respond so positively to the lore and legends of an earlier time.

One of the better sources of these legends is the *Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend*, from which I should like to quote the following: "Primitive men generally look on blood as being life itself. They see blood flow and the body die and therefore

assume that life flows out of the body in a literal sense. Closely allied to this is the belief that the soul or spirit of the being is in his blood; and that when blood escapes, the blood-soul escapes, too. For these reasons, taboos, superstitions, magical practices, and rituals have grown up in great number in connection with blood." For example: "The blood of human beings and of many animals must not fall on the ground, for it will impregnate the earth with the soul or spirit of the owner, thus making the ground on which it falls dangerous ground. It is believed that the soul of the owner will forever afterwards be there, ready to work harm on intruders. For these reasons many people abstain from eating or drinking the blood of animals, lest the spirit of the animal enter into them."

I might add that this is particularly true of animals sacred to the gods, for the spirit of the god can enter along with the blood. This is also true of the flesh of sacred animals. But to continue: "More commonly the reverse is the practice. Since the blood contains the soul and animus of the owner, and since by the drinking of the blood his spirit and animus becomes a part of the drinker, many people have practiced blood eating and

It might be pointed out at this juncture that blood is largely indigestible and when drunk in any quantity forms a hard, intractable mass. It should take but little reflection to understand why vampires have such poor digestions and foul dispositions. Presumably this would apply to Popes as well.

Blood has played a large part in the rituals of most religions. The ritual of drinking the blood of the god is based on the belief that the qualities of the god is based on the belief that the qualities of the god are so transmitted to the worshipper. The sacredness of the Holy Grail in many of the Grail stories comes from the belief that it once contained the blood of Christ. It is consequently a life-giving vessel. We should mention here the purification rite in the religions of Mithras and Cybele in which the initiated stands beneath a grating and is washed in the blood of a bull or ram. That these ideas are still with us today—if even in no more than a figurative sense—is brought to mind by the words of a Christian hymn: "Washed in the blood of the lamb."

The most common of all religious rituals is that of sacrifice to the gods, and basically every sacrifice is a blood—not flesh—sacrifice. One propitiates the gods



Another seeker after blood, here inside an ancient tomb, as pictured in Western-International's *The Werewolf vs. the Vampire Woman*.

drinking to enrich themselves.

"Blood being life can likewise protect or restore life. Blood is consequently widely used by the folk as medicine, and appears almost as frequently as the Water of Life as the means of restoring the dead."

From another source: "The antiquity of the concept of blood as a therapeutic agent is difficult to establish. It began with the origin of medicine itself. Ancient Egyptians used blood baths for resuscitation and recuperation, and Romans were said to have rushed into the gladiatorial arena to drink the blood of dying victims as a method of rejuvenating themselves."

There is the oft-quoted and supposed transfusion of Pope Innocent VII in 1492. In an effort to bring the elderly pontiff out of a state of coma, he was supposed to have received the blood of three young men, but to no avail. Not only did he succumb promptly, but so did the donors. Quite probably the blood was administered as a drink.

by giving the best—the blood of one's first born. In later stages of society animals are substituted, their blood poured in libations or allowed to run over the altar of the god. Likewise, in many religions, the god gives the blood of his son in sacrifice to mankind.

These rites underline the value which blood has in expiating sin: it can be used to expiate sin because it is the means of life: "The life of flesh is in its blood. This blood I have given to you, in order that you may perform the rite of expiation upon the altar, for your lives; for blood makes expiation by reasons of the life that is in it." LV 17:11. Compare He 9:22: "Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness at all."

It is plain to see, then, that if blood is the very life of man and a gift to many by the gods, and hence, sacred to the gods, that it is a very potent fluid indeed, and why the color red appears in the flags of so many nations, and why, most especially, this magic substance should sustain the life of Him Who Is Undead, *The Vampire!*

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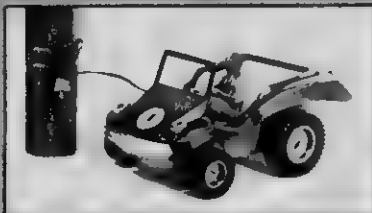


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THE LIFE STORY OF DRACULA



By Jim Harmon

Lord of the Vampires. Master of the Undead. Prince of Hell. A name to conjure fear in even the stoutest heart. Down through the centuries his name has become synonymous with all that is bestial and depraved in Man. And yet, horrible though the man is, Dracula has become as well known to us as some of our great political personages—we seem to be both fascinated and repelled by this night-stalking hellspawn. We have read of him in history books; we have read of him in Bram Stoker's classic novel; we have read of him in the Marvel Comics adaptation. We have seen him in the cinema portrayed by Bela Lugosi, Christopher Lee, Frances Lederer, John Carradine; and on television in the person of Jack Palance. There is nothing about Dracula—the man and the myth—we do not know.

Nothing?

Ask again, friend.

Because, months ago—before our pulse-pounding premiere issue, to be precise—there were many people who thought the same thing about King Kong. They'd seen the movies, read all the books and magazine articles; they knew it all.

Until our Wild'n'Wooly West Coast Editor, Jim Harmon unleashed his *Life Story of King Kong* on an unsuspecting world, and that same world learned the never-before-told-truth about the last days of that noble, exploited ape. Learned—among other things—that the pilots who shot Kong off the Empire State Building were none other than G-8 and his Battle Aces; and that G-8 himself was . . . but need we say more?

Now, Editor Harmon has done it again! And we present to you, *The Life Story of Dracula*, culled from the same mysterious sources and check-full of never-before-told—never before *hinted at*—revelations about the Lord of the Undead. Who—*really*—was the man known as—Renfield? And who was the mysterious man-hunter who tracked Renfield—and Dracula!—to Carfax Abbey while van Helsing, Seward and the others followed up false leads in Transylvania? The answers to these questions—and more—await below.



Bela Lugosi observes the crates of earth, the make-do coffins, which will house himself and his wives in *Dracula*, 1931.

"I am Dracula. I bid you welcome."

Renfield gazed at the tall figure on the stairway in confusion. It had all been so . . . strange. Those people . . . the peasants . . . had warned him not to go to Castle Dracula, had made him wear a Crucifix "for his mother's sake." Then the carriage ride that was fast, much too fast, with a driver who was much too silent. Now finding himself in this *ruin* which hardly deserved to be called a castle. And this fellow on the stairs, in evening dress, as if Renfield's arrival were some special occasion . . . Renfield's nerves were none too strong. He had always had certain . . . problems. People didn't understand a truly sensitive person like him. It was getting to be too much, just too much, that was all.

The two strangers exchanged pleasantries, and the Englishman followed the Count up the ancient staircase.

Halfway up the stairs, Renfield ran into a veritable wall of spiderwebs. Dracula was beyond it, so he must have passed through some hole in the webs Renfield did not see. Impatiently, Renfield beat down the dusty strands and passed on.

The room at the top of the stairs was quite cheerful, apparently well dusted for his arrival; and a fire was going, smoke rising up the chimney. The Count had even prepared a meal for his visitor. Renfield was invited to help himself. The Englishman poured a glass of red wine for himself, and started to fill another for his host.

The Count motioned him off. "I never drink . . . 70 wine."

Renfield was quite content to be in this castle in Transylvania. He felt safe there, much safer than he did in London. While the motion picture version, or even Bram Stoker's novel never revealed this fact, new evidence has come to light concerning Renfield. He was not the innocent little man he pretended to be. Renfield was responsible for the Whitechapel murders in London. He was the man history has come to call "Jack the Ripper."

Ordinarily, Renfield would have been content to stay in London dealing out justice to the painted women he hated. The police were fools, and he had made laughing-stocks out of them daily. But a new figure had appeared on his trail . . . a tall man wearing a deerstalker, fore-and-aft cap. Official police reports made several references to the man in the deerstalker, some people thinking he was the murderer. Of course, the tall man had arrived at the scenes of the crime very close on Renfield's heels, but the man in the deerstalker cap was not the killer; he was the hunter.

The commission for Renfield to go to Transylvania had come at an opportune time for Renfield to get away from London and the man who pursued him. It was good to be in a nice, snug room with Count Dracula.

Sometime later, when he saw the three women in flowing gowns near his window, Renfield felt the old urge come over him. He had never taken his knife to three at one time, but that was a challenge! He ap-



This is Carfax Abbey in *Dracula*, the quaint little cottage Lugosi plans for a honeymoon with Miss Chandler

proached them. Perhaps he would have to lure one away from the rest, and then . . . But even the mad little rodent that was Renfield began to sense something . . . strange . . . something *different* about *these* women.

Then there was a great, flapping bat at the window . . . there was Count Dracula's face from somewhere . . . and Renfield felt himself swaying, losing consciousness. Perhaps, he thought in the last moment, perhaps he would have been better off staying in London after all.

“Flies? Flies? Who wants to eat flies? *Not when I can have some nice, juicy spiders!*”

Renfield grinned and laughed, the same laugh that he had sounded when they had found him—the last man alive on the doomed ship that had brought Count Dracula's “luggage” to England—luggage consisting of great, long boxes of soil for scientific experiments.

He had been put away in Dr. Seward's Sanitarium for the Insane. But Renfield's insanity had not been created by the bite of the vampire count, Dracula. Actually the drawing of Renfield's life force by Dracula had weakened Renfield's killer instincts to the point he could only kill the smallest of insects. In a way, he was calmer than before. He could see more clearly. He could see that the lovely Miss Lucy was different than all those other women. He wanted to protect her. He tried to warn Dr. Seward and the others during those daylight hours when he could not see Dracula's burning eyes in his mind, the eyes that spoke

to him and showed him things he both feared and desired.

Dr. Seward's Patient Crows Weaker

“Lucy is growing weaker,” Abraham Van Helsing told his colleague, Dr. Seward. “Ordinary medical science can not aid her. Tell me, Doctor, have you not heard of the *vampire*?”

The elderly doctor looked puzzled. “What do you mean by ‘vampire’?”

“*Count Dracula*,” the maid intoned from the doorway, announcing the caller in Victorian fashion.

The distinguished nobleman appeared in the archway, attired in evening dress. “Once again, you must forgive me for calling so late, but I wished to inquire about Miss Lucy.”

The three men exchanged some civilities, and Dr. Seward was called away to see to one of the patients, a man named Renfield, who was causing a disturbance.

Van Helsing and Dracula, left alone, regarded each other.

“I want to show you something very interesting, Count . . . in this box,” the Dutch physician said.

Van Helsing opened the small chest—and revealed a mirror which did not reflect the vampire's accursed image.

Dracula struck the box from the doctor's hands. “You are wise, Van Helsing, for a man who has not lived even a single lifetime. *Too wise . . .*”

The Prince of the Undead attempted to draw the



Universal Pictures followed Lugosi with other actors as Dracula. After Lon Chaney in *Son of Dracula*, John Carradine made a distinguished Dracula in two pictures, *House of Frankenstein*, billboarded here, and *House of Dracula*.

doctor to him with his supernatural will power. Van Helsing faltered. He took a step towards his nemesis . . . but at last, his own will power took hold and he stepped back. His will was only mortal, but some Higher Power had decreed that human will, properly applied, could always resist Evil.

At this point, Dracula bared his fangs and prepared to spring. He had decided it was no more Mr. Nice Guy (or the Transylvanian equivalent). But Van Helsing still had some very effective defenses—more effective than a mirror or Wolfbane. The doctor produced a Crucifix, the symbol of the religion Dracula had turned against to become a member of the Cursed Undead.

Dracula hid his face from the sight of the Cross with his cape, and fled.

"Now," he called back, "I shall take not only Lucy, but Nina Harker as well shall join me in the world beyond the grave."

A Beloved One is Lost

Lucy died.

Despite the blood transfusions, despite all efforts to keep the vampire from entering the house. Dracula entered and claimed the soul of Lucy Westenra.

Van Helsing knew what had to be done. As dawn came up, he entered the crypt and released Lucy from the foul curse of vampirism. The evil look to her face, the sharpness of her teeth, the mad glint to her eyes, they all dropped away like some hideous veil, revealing the sweet face of the innocent girl they had loved.



Christopher Lee brought Dracula back to life for a new generation in a series of Hammer films, including *Dracula Has Risen From the Grave*.

The stake did it. The wooden stake that entered the heart that Death had stilled, and which the dark powers of the vampire had rekindled. After that one horrible moment, the rightful peace of Death came over Lucy forever.

Dracula was enraged.

One of his lovely wives had been taken from him. Fate was so cruel; mortals were so lacking in understanding, the Vampire Prince ranted to himself. They tried with all their puny powers to keep from him the blood that was his life force, the blood he needed to exist; and to keep from him the women he loved.

What did their puny little lives matter when it came to providing Immortality for him, one of the Undead? What did their puny little loves for their mortal women matter, when he desired one of those women?

Some writers interpret Dracula as a pathetic figure, cursed with his vampiric affliction, deserving of our sympathy. (Richard Matheson presented an excellent example of this viewpoint in his recent script for the television movie, *DRACULA*, starring Jack Palance.)

The older, more enduring view of Dracula is that he is Evil Incarnate. Bela Lugosi in the 1931 film was a figure of Evil, luxuriating in committing evil. To the present writer, Dracula seems much the Victorian

equivalent of today's heroin addict. Your new car, your hi-fi set—your *life*—mean nothing to him, if the addict requires any of these things to get what he needs to stick into his arm. Barry Atwater has revealed that he based his interpretation of *THE NIGHT STALKER* partly on the ruthless determination of an addict to get what he wanted.

I have departed from the story narrative of *DRACULA* at this point, because it is here that the various versions of the tale differ.

According to Bram Stoker's novel, Van Helsing, Dr. Seward, Jonathan Harker and others pursue Count Dracula back to Transylvania. There they battle a band of Gypsies for Dracula's coffin; and succeed in driving a stake through the vampire's heart and cutting off his head, slaying the vampire now and for all time, and thus releasing Nina from his curse.

The 1931 movie version with Lugosi has Van Helsing arriving at Carfax Abbey—near the Seward Sanitarium—and dispatching Dracula with a stake through the heart in a tame, offscreen action that then releases Nina from Dracula's power.

But is this what actually happened?

Recent evidence indicates that the detective who had been pursuing Renfield for his murders as Jack the

Ripper had mistakenly believed that Dracula's vampiric murders were only a continuation of the Ripper's slayings. (The dates in the original novel are deliberately altered, incidentally.) It was this detective in the Deerstalker, fore-and-aft cap who traced down Dracula to Carfax Abbey at the precise moment the vampire was killing the poor, doomed Renfield. The dying little man babbled out all the facts that the great detective needed to know.

As dawn came up, Dracula was slain not with a wooden stake, but with something equally as fatal to the Undead—a thin needle of silver which the detective happened to have on him, driven through Dracula's cold heart.

What? You never heard that story before? Not in the movies, not in the novel, not in the Marvel Comics Group version? Then remember you read it first in **Monsters of the Movies**.



In a departure from his Hammer version of the evil Count, Christopher Lee also appeared in *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, which attempted a more literal interpretation of the famous novel.

Was Renfield really "Jack the Ripper?" And was his hunter in the fore-and-aft deerstalker cap the man-hunter we all think he was? And did he kill Dracula in Carfax Abbey, a scene in direct opposition to both Stoker's novel and the 1931 film—not to mention Hammer Films' 1958, *HORROR OF DRACULA*, and the 1974 Richard Matheson TV adaptation. Not to mention Marvel's own comics adaptation. But then, Editor Harmon states that he has unearthed new evidence; *what* new evidence, you may ask? Who can say? Is this interpretation of the Dracula legend as valid—as *believable*?—as the others? That, gentle reader—as it has ever been; as it shall ever be—is up to *you!*



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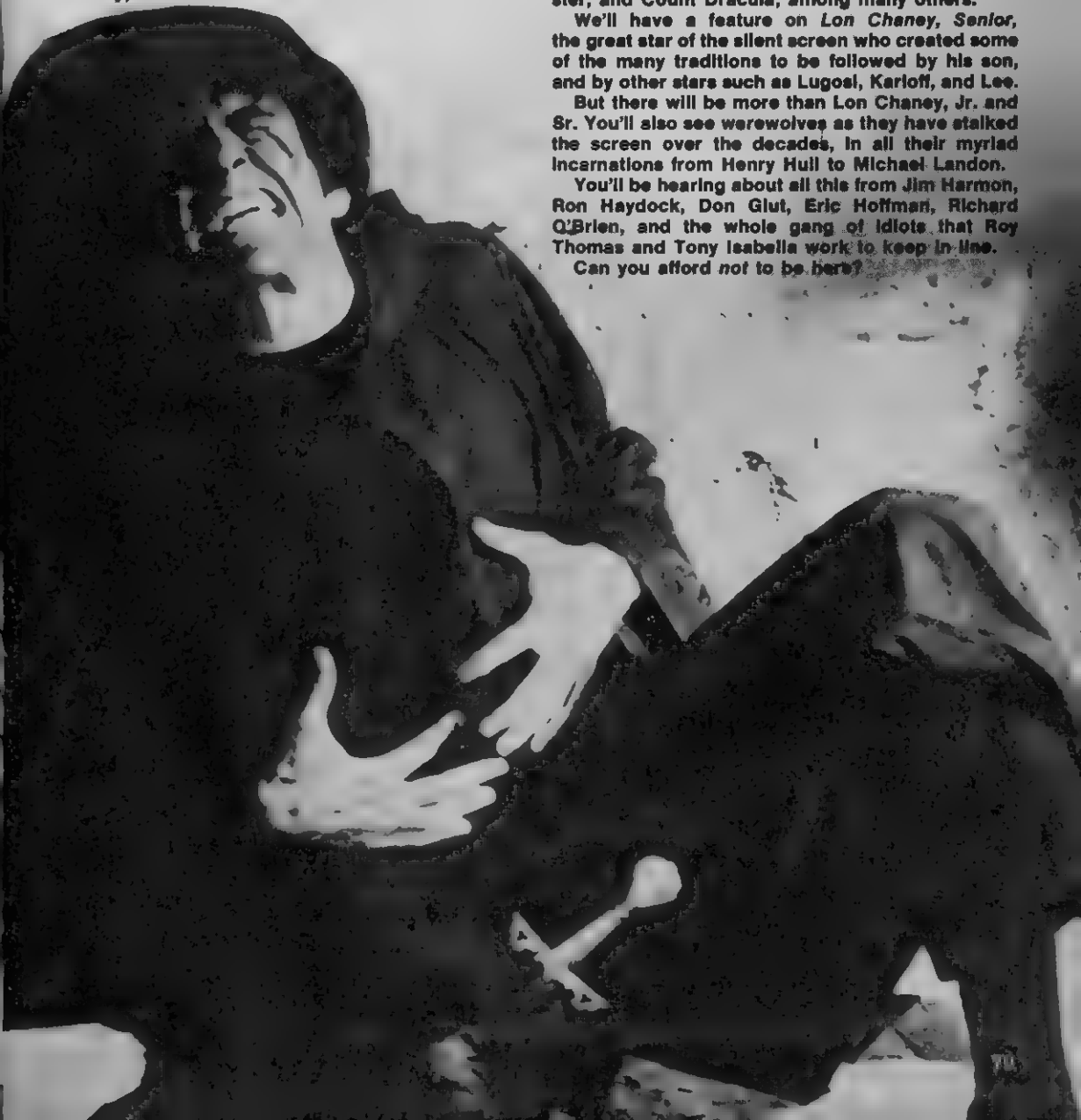
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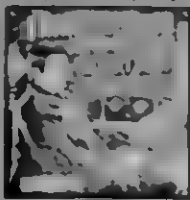
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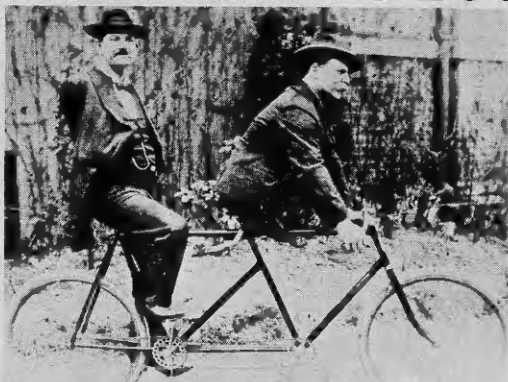
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